



For Immediate Release:

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## INSPIRED BY THE OLD WORLD, CREATED FOR THE NEW

**VENTURA CIGAR COMPANY TO LAUNCH 2 BLENDS CREATED BY MASTERS FOR CUBAN CIGAR FACTORY BRAND.**

June 2019 – “Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What’s a sundial in the shade?” (Benjamin Franklin)

Benjamin “Benji” Menendez and Manuel “Manolo” Quesada: two of the greatest of all time. Cigar industry pioneers, builders, blenders, visionaries, creators, and friends. True legends of the business, Menendez and Quesada are teaming up for the first time in an exciting new passion project from Michael Giannini and Ventura Cigar Company (VCC). Led by their longtime friend, Giannini, Menendez and Quesada have each collaborated on a namesake blend for Cuban Cigar Factory. A celebration of tradition and talent, this collaboration for Ventura Cigar Company’s Cuban Cigar Factory is bringing the importance of Old-World Cuban expat expertise to the palates of the present and generations to come.



### Behind the Blends

**Benji Menendez** enjoyed an early beginning in the Cuban tobacco business at his father’s factory. Forced to leave his home and livelihood when Castro came to power, Menendez had to start completely over. However, as a seeker of opportunity and a purveyor of fine tobacco, he soon established a new

foothold, becoming a mastermind behind cigars and factories in nearly **every** cigar-making country. His career has been legendary, working in 8 different countries to produce some of the best cigars to hit the market.

"I still think about the cigar factory every day of my life," says Benji Menendez.

**The Benji Menendez for Cuban Cigar Factory:** available in a Robusto, Toro, and Belicoso, a rich, silky smooth blend featuring a Dominican binder, Dominican and Nicaraguan fillers, and a Connecticut Ecuadorian wrapper.

**Manolo Quesada** is a fourth-generation master from a lineage of tobacco growers, brokers, and blenders that stretch back over a century. His career began in pre-Castro Cuba, where he first developed a taste for the intricacies of tobacco at his father's company. Also forced to leave Cuba by Castro's rise to power, Quesada went to the Dominican Republic, where he founded MATASA in 1972, from the humble beginnings of a chair, a phone, three rollers, and \$100. Over the decades, MATASA has flourished under Quesada's intuitive, expert eye for quality and flavor, making his knowledge for the past and present a natural fit for the Cuban Cigar Factory project.

**The Manolo Quesada for Cuban Cigar Factory:** available in a Robusto, Toro, and Belicoso, a rich and savory blend featuring an Ecuadorian binder, Dominican fillers, and a Habano Ecuador wrapper.

"I feel like I'm a Rick Rubin of the cigar industry," says Michael Giannini, General Manager at Ventura Cigar. "I'm bringing people together- people who I admire, my great friends who laid the foundation of the cigar industry, and people of the next generation. The creators and the consumers. Everyone has something to offer. We have a duty to engage this talent, not to let these great minds and their priceless knowledge fade away. They're now our mentors, an inspiration to us all, and they're still here. They're still on the court, so let's play ball. Let's show everyone what we can do."

Both Cuban Cigar Factory cigars are created at the MATASA factory in the Dominican Republic, in collaboration with Ventura Cigar Company. They are set to debut at IPCPR 2019, and are planned for a late summer ship date. The Benji Menendez and Manolo Quesada blends will each be available as follows:

Robusto: 5"x50, \$12.99 each or \$259.98 for a box of 20

Toro: 6"x50, \$13.99 each or \$279.98 for a box of 20

Belicoso: 6.25"x52, \$14.49 each, or \$289.98 for a box of 20

For more information about Cuban Cigar Factory, or any other cigars in the Ventura Cigar Company Portfolio, please visit [venturacigar.com](http://venturacigar.com).

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### **About Ventura Cigar Company**

Ventura Cigar Company (VCC) is a unique cigar brand born in sunny Southern California that is on a mission to create memorable, complex cigar blends that excite the senses and reward discriminating palates. Their flagship Archetype, Case Study, Project805, and PSyKo SEVEN brands offer multiple award-winning blends that earned 90+ ratings in Cigar Aficionado, Cigar & Spirits, and Cigar Snob. And Archetype's Axis Mundi won #13 Cigar of the Year for 2017 from Cigar Aficionado. Ventura Cigar

Company also distributes Tommy Bahama Luxury Cigar Accessories and the 4<sup>th</sup> Generation Tobacconist and Comoy's of London lines of pipe tobacco products, extending its reach and tradition of offering top-quality tobacconist products. Pipes and blends under these brands are cultivated through generations of craftsmanship, making them longtime favorites of pipe tobacco enthusiasts.