

# Cigar Insider

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## FEATURED CIGAR

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CONDE 54 EXCLUSIVO MEXICO

CUBA ■ PRICE: \$32.00 ■ BODY: MED. TO FULL

For a full tasting, see page three.



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POINTS

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## RAFAEL GONZALEZ PERLA

### SPAIN WAS THE FIRST TO RECEIVE THIS NEW CUBAN SMOKE

while the rest of the world must wait. The Rafael Gonzalez brand has not received a new size in decades, but thanks to Spain's initiative a small new size was created for the line. Spaniards have been smoking the little cigar since November. For the full story on Spain's advanced release, see page 5.



## SOMETHING NEW AND FREE FROM CIGAR AFICIONADO

### INTRODUCING CIGAR AFICIONADO NEWS WATCH, A BRAND NEW EMAIL NEWSLETTER FROM CIGAR AFICIONADO.

We are proud to invite you to receive, free of charge, *Cigar Aficionado News Watch*, a twice-monthly newsletter that will help you keep abreast of the latest in the world of fine cigars. *Cigar Aficionado News Watch* comes out on the Tuesdays when you don't receive a *Cigar Insider*, and it contains briefs about cigar industry happenings, details on featured cigars, tips on how to get the most out of your smokes and points you to greater, more detailed coverage on cigaraficionado.com, our award-winning website. And the best part? It's entirely free. To sign up, simply visit [lp.cigaraficionado.com/email](http://lp.cigaraficionado.com/email). The next issue goes out Tuesday, January 31.

TO SUBSCRIBE GO TO [WWW.CIGARINSIDER.COM](http://WWW.CIGARINSIDER.COM)

 TASTING REPORT

## ROOM 101 LTD NAMAKUBI

## NEW RELEASE—VERTICAL BRAND TASTING

**Country:** Honduras**Maker:** Tabacos Rancho Jamastran**Distributor:** Davidoff of Geneva (FL) Inc.**Filler:** Dom. Rep., Honduras**Binder:** Honduras**Wrapper:** Ecuador**Release Date:** September 2011

## ROXXO

90 POINTS ■ 4" x 48 ■ \$7.00

Fat and oily, this short robusto draws well, offering leathery, toasty intonations balanced by oaky and woody flavor as the cigar progresses.

**Body:** Medium

## PAPI CHULO

89 POINTS ■ 4" x 42 ■ \$6.00

A salty, earthy smoke with some cedary elements. It burns a bit unevenly but draws well, leaving a slight chalkiness on the palate.

**Body:** Medium

## TIBURON

89 POINTS ■ 6" x 44 ■ \$8.00

Topped with a well-crafted cap, this attractive corona gorda initially imparts plenty of earth and spice before settling into salty, nutty flavors.

**Body:** Medium

## SUCIO

88 POINTS ■ 7" x 48 ■ \$9.00

This cigar smokes evenly, producing a flaky ash as it burns. Walnut and leather flavors give way to some tea notes, though there is a bit of a fumey aftertaste.

**Body:** Medium

## MONSTRO

87 POINTS ■ 5" x 60 ■ \$10.00

A super thick, tawney-colored plug of a cigar whose toasty start takes on a cereal, wheaty and oat-like character before a floral finish.

**Body:** Medium

**BRAND SUMMARY:** The Room 101 LTD Namakubi, an offshoot of the Room 101 brand, was inspired by Japan's Samurai culture. According to the tale, after Samurai clans battled, a freshly severed head from the losing party would be prepared on a wooden tray then tagged in a regimented manner and presented to the leader of the winning clan. Thankfully, the attractive Namakubi black satin boxes only hold cigars. The boxes are artfully decorated with red lettering conceived by brand owner Matt Booth. There are five sizes but the standout was the Roxxo, a 4 inch by 48 ring short robusto that scored 90 points, the only cigar in the line to break into the 90-point percentile. The cigars come 20 to the box, with 1,000 boxes of each size, save for the Papi Chulo, which is packed 50 to the box and is limited to 400 boxes. The Namakubis are made by Camacho and distributed by Davidoff.

**Average Rating:** 88.6 points

## LA FLOR DOMINICANA COLORADO OSCURO

## NEW RELEASE—VERTICAL BRAND TASTING

**Country:** Dominican Republic**Maker:** Tabacalera La Flor S.A.**Distributor:** Premium Imports Inc.**Filler:** Dom. Rep.**Binder:** Dom. Rep.**Wrapper:** Nicaragua**Release Date:** November 2011

## NO. 2

88 POINTS ■ 4 1/4" x 48 ■ \$6.50

There's a combination of leather and sour cherry flavors to this dark, oily cigar. Slight hints of cashews and minerals come through on the finish.

**Body:** Full

100 POINT SCALE

95-100: Classic ■ 90-94: Outstanding ■ 80-89: Very good to excellent ■ 70-79: Average to good commercial quality  
Below 70: Don't waste your money ■ N/A: Not Available *Note: Prices are manufacturers' suggested retail, before taxes.*

## NO. 5

88 POINTS ■ 5 3/4" x 60 ■ \$7.90

A strong aroma comes off the unlit wrapper of this thick, dark cigar, though the flavors are nutty with an earthy aftertaste.

**Body:** Medium to Full

## NO. 4

87 POINTS ■ 5 1/4" x 54 ■ \$7.50

Dark and veiny, this is a woody-tasting cigar that leans heavily on hickory notes. Slight mineral flavors and touches of mint linger on the palate.

**Body:** Medium to Full

## NO. 3

86 POINTS ■ 5" x 50 ■ \$6.90

This dark robusto has plenty of roasted espresso bean flavor, but an underlying charriness only gets stronger as the cigar is smoked.

**Body:** Full

**BRAND SUMMARY:** A new strain of Nicaraguan Habano-seed wrapper was the inspiration for La Flor Dominicana's Colorado Oscuro brand, a cigar released twice a year—July and December. The No. 2 and the No. 5 were the standouts.

**Average Rating:** 87.3 points

## EDMUNDO DANTES

### NEW SIZE

**Country:** Cuba

**Maker:** Habanos S.A.

**Distributor:** Habanos S.A. via Importadora y Exportadora de Puros y Tabacos S.A. De C. V.

**Filler:** Cuba

**Binder:** Cuba

**Wrapper:** Cuba

**Box Date:** July 2011

## CONDE 54 EXCLUSIVO MEXICO

93 POINTS ■ 6 1/2" x 54 ■ \$32.00 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

This rich, complex cigar exhibits profound balance, starting with bottom notes of red meat and earthy truffle, a midrange of cashews and top notes of cinnamon.

**Body:** Medium to Full

## QUAI D'ORSAY

### NEW SIZES

**Country:** Cuba

**Maker:** N/A

**Distributor:** Habanos S.A. via SEITA and Pacific Cigar Ltd.

**Filler:** Cuba

**Binder:** Cuba

**Wrapper:** Cuba

**Box Dates:** August 2011, July 2011

## ROBUSTO EMBAJADOR EXCLUSIVO FRANCIA

92 POINTS ■ 4 1/2" x 52 ■ 12.90 EURO ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

A flavorful robusto with a solid core of earth and cocoa bean flavors. Its graham cracker sweetness intensifies into a lively gingersnap finish. Interesting and complex.

**Body:** Medium to Full

## SUPERIORES EXCLUSIVO ASIA PACÍFICO

88 POINTS ■ 4 7/8" x 50 ■ HK\$185.00

Attractive and well rolled, this robusto starts with cedary, oaky flavors that turn a bit tangy on the aftertaste. The draw and burn remain even throughout.

**Body:** Medium

## RAMON ALLONES

### NEW SIZE

**Country:** Cuba

**Maker:** N/A

**Distributor:** Habanos S.A. via Havana House Cigar & Tobacco Merchants Ltd.

**Filler:** Cuba

**Binder:** Cuba

**Wrapper:** Cuba

**Box Date:** June 2011

## SUPER ALLONES EXCLUSIVO CANADÁ

93 POINTS ■ 7 1/8" x 54 ■ C\$46.82 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

A flawlessly rolled torpedo whose richly colored wrapper is silky to the touch. The café au lait creaminess lays the foundation for complex notes of cocoa bean and anise.

**Body:** Medium

## 100 POINT SCALE

95-100: Classic ■ 90-94: Outstanding ■ 80-89: Very good to excellent ■ 70-79: Average to good commercial quality  
Below 70: Don't waste your money ■ N/A: Not Available *Note: Prices are manufacturers' suggested retail, before taxes.*

## CIGAR NEWS

### MODEST CIGAR PRICE HIKES PLANNED FOR 2012

BY G. CLAY WHITTAKER

Change is coming soon to the prices of many premium cigars. Due to rising costs of tobacco and other raw materials for the cigar business, many popular brands will soon go up in price, though some brands will remain unaffected and a select few have even become less expensive.

The two biggest companies in the cigar business, Altadis U.S.A. Inc. and General Cigar Co., are both instating modest price increases on some brands and individual sizes. “We, like all manufacturers, have experienced surges in raw costs for materials, manufacturing and transportation costs, and pass on only a small portion of these costs in the pricing,” said Janelle Rosenfeld, vice president of marketing for Altadis U.S.A. The Fort Lauderdale, Florida, company has plans for a price hike of 2.5 percent to 5 percent on some products, which takes effect on February 1. Altadis produces **Romeo y Julieta** and **Montecristo**, among many other cigar brands.

General Cigar spokesperson Victoria McKee confirmed General’s price increase of 3 percent, which took effect on all orders made after January 15. McKee also noted that the prices of all large C.A.O. cigars have stayed put, and the company actually lowered the price on C.A.O. Cameroon and Maduro. General last increased its prices by 3 percent in 2010, and did not institute an increase last year. General produces many brands, including **Macanudo**, **La Gloria Cubana** and **Cohiba**.

Davidoff of Geneva, which produces not only **Davidoff** but **Zino**, **Avo** and other cigars, has plans for a 10 cent per cigar increase on some of its brands. The hike will go into effect February 20. In addition to being a response to rising costs, Davidoff president Jim Young said, “This modest price increase will help fund critical legislative activities, most notably our important efforts in collaboration with the CRA [Cigar Rights of America] to exempt premium cigars from FDA regulatory oversight, Senate Bill 1461 and House Resolution 1639.”

Tabacalera A. Fuente y Cia., maker of **Arturo Fuente** cigars, also has plans to raise prices this year. “We don’t know exactly when, and we don’t know what

percentage yet,” said Carlos Fuente Jr. “We’re trying to hang on as long as we can.”

Prices are also going up at smaller companies. Terence Reilly of S.A.G. Imports Inc., which sells **Fonseca**, **Quesada**, and **Casa Magna** cigars, said S.A.G. is raising some prices 1 percent to 2 percent. He attributed some of this to rising labor costs: “A lot of factors went into this,” he said, “including a general wage increase mandate in the Dominican Republic.” Most of the company’s cigars are produced in the Dominican Republic. Its Fonseca lines, Casa Magna Colorado Oscuro, and some other S.A.G. brands saw 10 to 20 cent per cigar increases. The price on the Quesada brand remained unchanged.

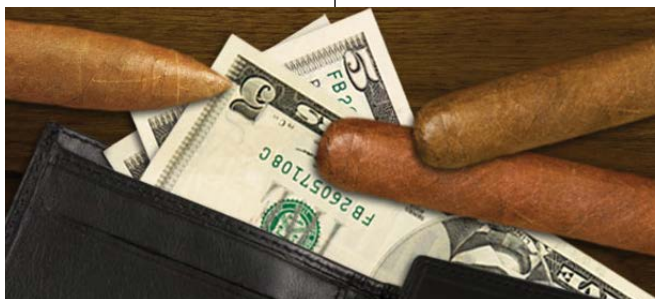
**Tatuaje** founder Pete Johnson has not increased retail prices yet this year, but is considering a wholesale increase of about 2 percent for 2012, which would be the first such increase for his company since 2008. He said the move would be to keep up with rising costs.

Some boutique companies are not planning any sort of price increase, even though many say they are feeling the effects of inflation. **La Flor Dominicana**, **God of Fire** and **E.P. Carrillo** all said they have no plans to raise prices in 2012. Ernesto Perez-Carrillo III of E.P. Carrillo said that his company did not consider a 2012 increase, though may consider one in the future. “Our margins are getting pressed,” he said.

Alec Bradley Cigar Co., which garnered Cigar of the Year honors for its **Alec Bradley Prensado** Churchill, also has no plans to raise prices. Vice president of marketing Sam Phillips told *Cigar Insider*: “At this moment, we have no plans to raise prices. We have not decided to raise prices this year.” Phillips said that stories on the Internet misquoted Alec Bradley executive George Sosa, who acknowledged that some factories that produce cigars for Alec Bradley were considering raising prices.

Barry Stein, assistant director of marketing and advertising for Miami Cigar & Co., which owns the various **Nestor Miranda** brands, said that a 2012 increase was not discussed: “As far as I know,” he said, “it’s not on the table. With the state of the economy and increasing tobacco taxes being considered in various states we feel it is not fair to our customers.”

For consumers, most of these price increases will be seen in staggered steps, as the new prices come into effect with new shipments. One New York retailer said a few companies had informed him of their intent to raise prices, though most had not. Retailers appear to be taking the modest increases with a grain of salt, and one told *Cigar Insider* he did not expect any serious effects on this year’s sales. “It’s hard to pull a guy away from a cigar.” ■



## SPAIN FIRST TO RECEIVE NEW CUBAN RAFAEL GONZALEZ

BY GREGORY MOTTOLA

While the rest of the world awaits the release of the new **Rafael Gonzalez** Perla from Habanos S.A., cigar lovers in Spain not only received them early, but they have been smoking them since November. The new size was imported by Altadis S.A., Imperial Tobacco's Iberian arm responsible for bringing in all Cuban cigars to Spain, the world's largest consumer of Cuban cigars.

As to why Spain has shipments of the new smoke when nobody else does, Habanos marketing subdirector Gonzalo Fernández de Navarrete González-Valerio tells *Cigar Insider*: "The Rafael Gonzalez Perla was an Altadis proposal, so therefore they have been the first to receive it. The Spanish domestic market is a very big market and we have to make sure that we have enough quantity for Spain and for everybody else."

According to Fernandez, Spain is still the only market to have the Perlas, but the new size is scheduled to be shipped worldwide in the upcoming months, most likely in the first half of the year.

Elena Gonzalez Laguna, director of trade and marketing for Altadis S.A., confirmed that Spain's response has been largely positive.

"Rafael Gonzalez is doing well here in Spain," said Laguna. "The most popular size is the Panatelas Extra, but the Perla format is expected to do well because of market tendencies—shorter cigars for less smoking time."

Rafael Gonzalez is a very small brand, and has not received a new size in decades. The introduction of the Perla, which measures 4 inches by 40 ring gauge, brings the line up to only three sticks. It is slated to be a regular-production cigar. The release marks the first time that Rafael Gonzalez has been rolled in a Perla-sized format. It retails for 2.30 euros (about \$3.00) in Spain.

The cigar band has also been updated for the new release (see cover page). It's no longer printed on matte brown paper, but has been modernized with a glossy finish and brighter type. This is consistent with the current trend of newer Cuban production runs. **H. Upmann**, **Montecristo**, **Sancho Panza** and **Quai D'Orsay**, for example, have all abandoned their older, matte paper stock in favor of glossier, more brilliantly colored bands.

The rest of the cigar-smoking world will have to wait.

The Rafael Gonzalez Perla is to be passed out at next month's Habanos Festival.

Look for coverage on new releases in a future issue. ■



## PURO VINTAGE FROM AURORA SHIPS TO SHOPS

BY GREGORY MOTTOLA

On January 19, distributor Miami Cigar & Co. shipped out the first boxes of the new **Aurora Puro Vintage** 2004, a double-tapered 6 1/2 inch by 52 ring Salomon-shaped cigar made in the Dominican Republic at the La Aurora S.A. factory. This is the second release of the Puro Vintage since the 2003 edition hit the market in 2009. Although the cigar is a bit smaller this time around, the blend is the same, consisting of an Ecuadoran wrapper around Dominican binder and filler tobacco, all of which was culled from a 2004 harvest. At \$18.75 per cigar, the Puro Vintage 2003 comes packaged in boxes of eight. Only 1,000 boxes were made.

The original Puro Vintage rated 92 points in a 2009 *Cigar Insider*. Look for a rating of the new vintage soon. ■



## HABANOS S.A. CUTS CUBAN SIZES AND PACKAGING FOR 2012

BY GREGORY MOTTOLA

Fans of Cuban cigars such as the **Hoyo de Monterrey** Churchill or **Bolivar** Corona Extra had better stock up. As of 2012, Habanos S.A., the worldwide distributor of Cuba's cigars, has discontinued production of these and many other sizes in the portfolio in order to make room for its new releases. From small smokes to large vitolas, 14 sizes in total will be deleted this year, in addition to a few packaging formats.

Cancellations from major brands include the **Romeo y Julieta** Coronas (5 5/8 inches by 42 ring gauge) and **Petit Princess** (4 by 40), **Trinidad** Robusto Extra (6 1/8 by 50) and the short-lived **Trinidad** Robusto T (4 7/8 by 50), which was only introduced in 2009. Trinidad now consists of three sizes.

Small brands in the Habanos portfolio are becoming even smaller. This year's deletion of the **Sancho Panza** Molinos, a Cervantes measuring 6 1/2 by 42 (known outside of Cuba as a lonsdale), brings the brand down to a mere two sizes total—only the **Non Plus** and **Belicosos** remain. But the Molinos is not the only Cervantes size being cut in 2012. Habanos is also getting rid of the **Vegas Robaina** Clasicos, leaving only two Cervantes in Cuba's



CUBA IS CUTTING 14 CIGARS, INCLUDING THE TRINIDAD ROBUSTO EXTRA, HOYO CHURCHILL, SANCHO PANZA MOLINO AND THE VEGUEROS BRAND.

regular-production portfolio: The **Montecristo** No. 1 and the **Romeo y Julieta Cedro Deluxe** No. 1. Vegas Robaina fans can also say goodbye to the corona-sized **Familiar**. These cuts bring the brand down from five sizes to three.

The **El Rey del Mundo** Petit Corona has been cut for 2012, reducing the line to just two sizes—**Choix Supreme** and **Demitasse**. Over the last few years, cigars have been gradually disappearing from the **El Rey del Mundo** brand. In 2009 and 2010, Habanos stopped production of the **Grandes de España** (measuring 7 1/2 by 38) and **Lunch Club** (4 5/8 by 40), respectively. **Punch** has also seen a major decrease to its portfolio. In the last three years, eight sizes have been erased, including the 2012 dismissal of the **Petit Coronas del Punch**. That leaves the **Punch** brand with only five sizes.

This year also marks the complete eradication of the **Vegueros** brand. The small line was once made at the **Francisco Donatién** factory in **Pinar del Río**. Its four vitolas mirrored the thin gauge **Cohiba** sizes perfectly, but between 2010's deletion of the **Especiales** No. 1 and No. 2, and this year's demise of the **Mareva** and **Seones** sizes, **Vegueros** is no more, and the factory now focuses most of its small production on the **Trinidad** brand. (See the November *Cigar Aficionado* for more on **Francisco Donatién**.)

With the scaling back of sizes, Habanos has also paired down some packaging options. Previously available in cabinets of 50, the **Bolivar Petit Corona**, **H. Upmann Magnum 46**, **Romeo y Julieta Exhibición** No. 4 and **Saint Luis Rey Serie A** will no longer be offered in these large 50-count cases. Some three-pack formats like the **Hoyo de Monterrey Epicure** No. 1 and **Partagás DeLuxe** have been pulled, as have five-packs of the **Partagás Aristocrats**, **Cuaba Tradicionales** and **Trinidad Fundadores**, whose 12-count presentation boxes were also taken out of production.

It should be noted that although Habanos halted production on these sizes and packaging formats, overstock can still be found at retail, depending on the market. ■

## INSIDER Q&A: ALAN RUBIN, FOUNDER, ALEC BRADLEY CIGAR CO.

BY DAVID SAVONA

When Alan Rubin learned that his **Alec Bradley Prensado Churchill** had been named **Cigar of the Year** by *Cigar Aficionado* magazine, it had an immediate impact on his small cigar company. The phones began ringing when the news broke on [cigaraficionado.com](http://cigaraficionado.com) at 10 a.m. on January 6, and within an hour his entire inventory of the 96-point **Churchills** had been depleted.

*Cigar Insider* spoke with Rubin two weeks after the reveal, to find out how he has reacted to the news, what has changed at **Alec Bradley**, and what he's doing to increase production of these top-rated cigars.

**DAVID SAVONA:** Prior to the online countdown the week of January 2, did you have any idea that you had a top ten smoke, let alone the No. 1 cigar of the year?

**ALAN RUBIN:** We know that you have to score at a certain level throughout the year to be able to qualify for the **Top 25**. We knew that we didn't have too much of a shot with anything other than **Prensado**. That said, you never know how it will turn out. When I saw 4, 3 and 2 revealed [on January 5] I was just hoping to have something in the **top 25** come Monday [when Nos. 11 through 25 were to be revealed].

**Q:** And what happened when you heard the news?

**A:** The news went out at 10 a.m., and our first order came in at 10:01. By 11 o'clock we were sold out of our entire inventory. We've had people call from all over the world. They want to get the cigars in the **Top 25**. I can tell you first hand the amount of international exposure created by the **Top 25** countdown is heavy.



ALAN RUBIN

**Q:** What happened?

**A:** First, from a professional standpoint, you can't prepare. Your inventories are your inventories. Then something happens to you like this—you're not prepared. It's a numbing feeling, a very surreal feeling.

**Q:** You sold out of your inventory in one hour. Under normal circumstances, how long would that have lasted?

**A:** We had a four to six week inventory level, because it's January. It's cold outside. We normally like to have a three-month inventory.

**Q:** And what process did you go through to handle this influx of orders?

**A:** The first thing we do is we call all our customers who placed orders and explain why they didn't get their full order. When a guy orders 80 boxes and he only gets 15, he's not exactly happy. We have our scheduled production. In 2011, we committed to an additional one million Alec Bradley cigars.

**Q:** These are one million more Alec Bradleys to be produced by Fabrica de Tabacos Raices Cubanas, the factory that makes Prensado and most of your cigars?

**A:** Yes. That had already been discussed. Now we shifted some of the production off our other brands to Prensado. We adjusted the priority.

**Q:** You can't just immediately make more of the cigars—it takes time.

**A:** That's right. The other thing is this—the Prensado is a pressed product. You need pressing boxes. We need more.

**Q:** It's a cigar that takes longer to produce than your others, most of which are not box pressed?

**A:** Yes. We'll be able to meet some of the demand. If I had any more in my office, I would be smoking one today.

**Q:** You don't have one yourself?

**A:** No. We pulled out a box to celebrate here in the office. When I got to the office that day I picked up some Champagne, and at 10:30 we were smoking the Prensados.

**Q:** Now you don't have any to smoke?

**A:** No, there's not a single Prensado Churchill in the office.

**Q:** Has the Cigar of the Year news helped the entire Prensado line?

**A:** Yes, absolutely. It's affected the entire line, and the entire line of cigars in our Alec Bradley portfolio.

**Q:** How many Prensados do you make a year?

**A:** We made 250,000 Prensados in 2011.

**Q:** Where does it rank in unit sales in your portfolio?

**A:** It's probably fourth in our portfolio. It's on the higher price scale of Alec Bradley.

**Q:** When you created Prensado back in 2009, did you know it would be a hit?

**A:** I never knew how it would rate, but I thought consumers would accept the line. It was our first box-pressed line—and the first box-pressed cigar for Raices.

**Q:** The reaction from within the industry was very strong. People are very happy for you.

**A:** I probably received 30 texts and phone calls from people in the industry that day, congratulating me. There is no better part of the job. It's a pretty incredible feeling.

**Q:** What does this mean for Alec Bradley?

**A:** It means we can't rest. It means we have to continue working for that ranking. It gives us an increased credibility worldwide. And it can never be taken away from you. ■

## ALTADIS, OLIVA, GENERAL AND ASHTON JOIN FORCES WITH CERTIFRESH CIGAR

BY ANDREW NAGY

CertiFresh Cigar, a company that distributes premium cigars to more than 1,100 golf courses, has announced promotional partnerships with Ashton Distributors Inc., Altadis U.S.A Inc., Oliva Cigar Co., and General Cigar Co.

Each of the cigar companies will be running a series of advertisements in *PGA Magazine* that feature their respective cigars packaged in a custom CertiFresh Cigar bag. In addition, the companies and CertiFresh will be sponsoring four golf tournaments taking place at the PGA of America Golf Show in Orlando on January 25 to 28.

"We believe the CertiFresh system is the best way to ensure a golfer will get a great Ashton cigar that is in perfect condition to smoke while they are playing on their favorite golf course," said Chip Goldeen, director of sales for Ashton.

Started in 2009, CertiFresh now supplies prestigious golf courses like Bandon Dunes, Coeur d'Alene and

Pebble Beach with cigars that come individually packaged in coated sleeves that contain a Humidipak pillow rated at 69 percent. In addition, the company says it only distributes cigars that have been rated 87 points or higher by *Cigar Aficionado* magazine. ■

## IMPERIAL TOBACCO APPOINTS COMMONWEALTH-ALTADIS HEAD

BY G. CLAY WHITTAKER

There's a new face to one of the world's largest cigar companies. Kevin Freudenthal is now the region director for the Americas and the president and chief executive officer of Commonwealth–Altadis Inc., which is part of Imperial Tobacco Group PLC—the world's fourth largest tobacco company, according to Imperial.

Freudenthal has been in the tobacco business since 1986 when he joined U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Co. in the sales and marketing arena. That company was later acquired by Altria Group in 2008, at which point Freudenthal became vice president for category management with Altria. He has now joined Commonwealth–Altadis, and will start at the end of the month as predecessor Graham Bolt retires.

Freudenthal received his undergraduate degree from the University of the Pacific, and later graduated from the executives program at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Marketing. ■

## MIAMI-MADE GRAN HABANOS

BY DAVID SAVONA

**G**ran Habano cigars has opened a small cigar factory on Calle Ocho, Miami's historic Eighth Street in the heart of Little Havana. The 10-roller facility will make the small production Gran Habano Miami cigar brand. The location will also later serve as a smoking lounge, and will sell limited editions.

Gran Habano is one of several companies that is taking an interest in Miami rolling. Oliva Cigar Co. is soon to roll its *Oliva Serie V* in Miami and *Casa Fernandez* recently opened a Miami cigar factory, joining such companies as El Rey de los Habanos, El Titan de Bronze, Flor de Gonzalez and Puros Indios in making cigars in south Florida. ■

### CIGAR AFICIONADO'S "BIG SMOKE" 2012 SCHEDULE

*November 9-11*

#### LAS VEGAS • THE MIRAGE

Big Smoke evenings scheduled on Friday and Saturday, as well as cigar and lifestyle educational seminars on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

TICKETS GO ON SALE MARCH 15

*November 29*

#### NEW YORK CITY • PIER 92

TICKETS GO ON SALE APRIL 15

Visit [www.cigaraficionado.com](http://www.cigaraficionado.com)

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➔ Your Next CIGAR INSIDER Arrives on Tuesday, Feb. 7.

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