

# CHEF DANIEL SERFER IS AS TIRED OF SMALL PLATES AS YOU ARE

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One thing you may or may not read on Trip Advisor when looking up chef/owner Daniel Serfer's Miami restaurant, [Blue Collar](#), is that it's housed in a former motel. The kind that used to rent by the hour (though we're sure it was more like 10 minutes). While it's legal status has changed, the space is still serving up dishes that will definitely have you coming back for more. From Chanukah latkes (served year round) to seared diver scallops, the restaurant's simple yet complex menu and no frills, intimate atmosphere has made it one of Miami's most sought after tables. In 2014 Serfer opened his second restaurant, [Mignonette](#), a New Orleans-inspired oyster bar and restaurant with some of the best shellfish we've ever had. The chef and Miami native talked to us about everything from small plates (they're too small) to KFC (it's awesome), all without checking the clock.



## 1. What's an underrated food city and why?

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Miami gets most of the South Florida coverage. Our neighbor in Broward has some really great stuff too. Nicolay Adinagiev at Steak 954 is one of my favorites. Café Martorano is also great, and my favorite tacos (Alegria Tacos), burgers (Jack's Old Fashion Hamburgers), and hoagies (La Spada's Original Hoagies) are there.

## 2. What food/food trend are you tired of?

Small plates that are "meant for sharing." I went to Kindergarten, I know the concept of sharing, and small plates are not meant for sharing. Big plates are meant for sharing. C'mon people.

## 3. How do you feel about Yelp?

I think Yelp is a valuable tool. I read every review that's submitted for both of my restaurants—Bluecollar and Mignonette. I try to take in all of the information guests are writing or saying about each restaurant and act accordingly. Yelp is not the end all or the most important, just one piece of information out there for me, as an owner, to consume and use.

## 4. If your kitchen is burning down, what's the one gadget you save and why?

I can't save any of the people? You're a monster! Okay, I would save my [Mac brand chef knife, 8 inches with dimples and upward slope](#). It's my go-to gift for weddings or any special occasion. I have been using this knife for the past 10 years and I try and turn everyone on to it.

## 5. Your guilty pleasure food?

Never feel guilty about it, KFC original recipe thighs. Even if I knew the Colonel's secret I wouldn't replicate it. Respect.

## 6. If you could cook for one person—who would it be?

My dad. He died when I was 15, way before I ever knew I wanted to cook for a living. He made the best scrambled eggs and I was his dining buddy. I would love the opportunity to show him how I could cook all his favorites (linguine clams white, prime rib, South African lobster tails, chopped steak).

## 7. What are five ingredients that are always in your pantry?

Good red wine vinegar. Great honey. Cayenne Pepper. Kosher Salt. Black Pepper. One of those or some combination of 3 of them is always the answer.

## 8. What's the one mistake most amateur chefs make?

Not enough salt. Home cooks are typically afraid to use as much salt as we use in pro kitchens. We are constantly tasting a dish as it progresses and checking for seasoning and adding more salt if necessary. A good piece of anything needs to be heavily salted prior to cooking as some of it falls through the grill grates or is left in the pan, and if sliced needs to be seasoned afterwards as well.

## 9. What's the best advice you ever received?

Be good to your cooks and sous chefs. One day they could be your boss/chef.