Cigar: Head and Foot

First off, it is important to understand which end of the cigar is which. The end that is typically closed is the "head", sometimes referred to as the top. This is the end you smoke from. The opposite end, which is usually open, is called the "foot", or the bottom. This, obviously, is the end you light.

On the head there is what is called the "cap". This is an extra bit of wrapper placed on the cigar during the rolling process. It serves several purposes, such as helping to hold the wrapper together and to seal in the flavor and moisture of the tobacco.

There are three basic components to the cigar's structure. The first is the "filler". The filler is typically composed of 2-4 types of tobacco, creating the base of the cigar's flavor. Next is what is known as the "binder". This is a somewhat elastic leaf of tobacco used to hold the filler in place and create the cigar's form once rolled. Finally, there is the "wrapper". The wrapper is a visually-appealing and very elastic tobacco leaf which gives the cigar its distinct appearance.

All three elements (the filler, binder, and wrapper) play an important part in the cigar's over-all flavor, strength, and how it smokes. So, when trying different cigars, make note of all three elements if possible so you can begin to understand what you like about each and it will help you hone in on what is commonly referred to as one's favorite "go-to" cigar.