

# BISCAYNE

July 2013

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11 Issue 5

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# Times

# Homo Hysteria

The day Miami's newspapers whipped the city into a "pervert" frenzy  
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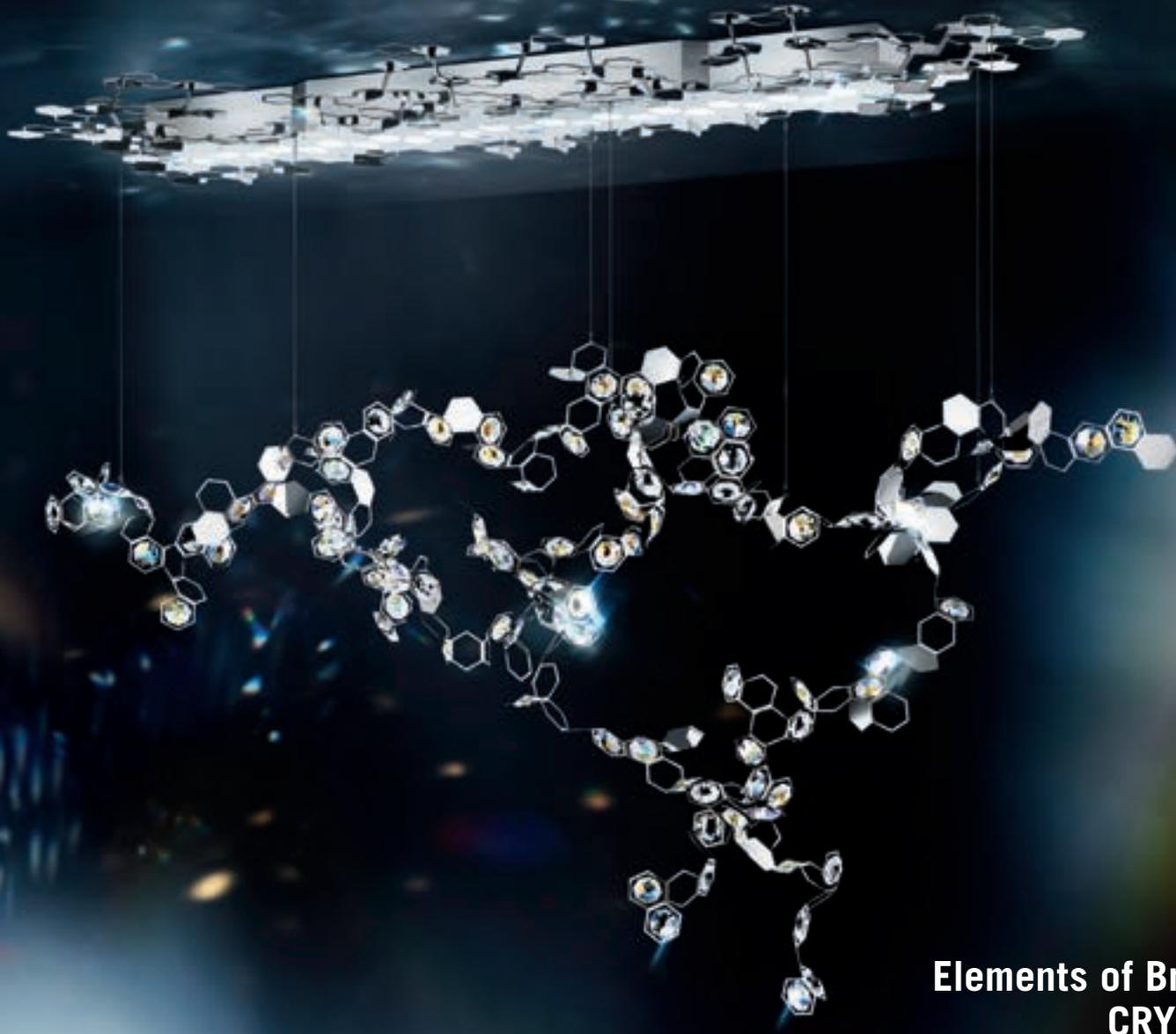
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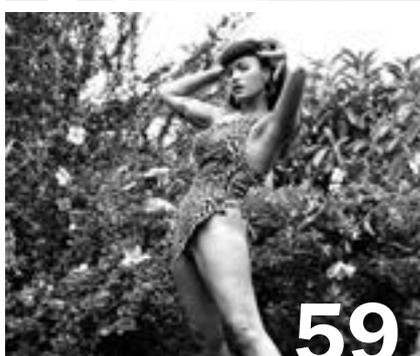
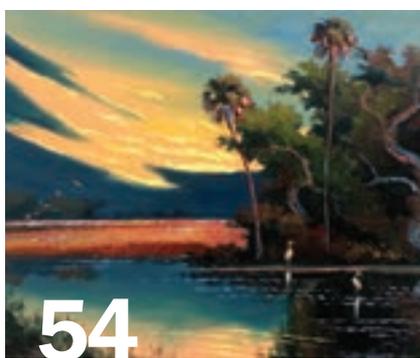
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## PRINTING

Stuart Web, Inc.  
[www.stuartweb.com](http://www.stuartweb.com)

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### Commentary: LETTERS

#### Greynolds Park: I Read, I Learned, I Joined

Thanks to Erik Bojnansky for his well-researched article about Greynolds Park ("Green Piece," June 2013). I did not know about this situation until I read it, and since then I have joined "Save Greynolds Park," a grass-roots organization trying save the park from further damage.

Keep up the good work bringing to our attention issues like this, which are of great interest to our communities.

Hopefully there will be a follow-up article in the future.

*Elena Castro-Moran  
North Miami*

#### Greynolds Park: Arrogant, Dismissive Public "Servants"

In Erik Bojnansky's story "Green Piece," North Miami Beach city attorney Darcee Siegel is quoted as saying, "The bottom line is that some people don't like change."

I don't live in North Miami Beach, but I've been enjoying Greynolds Park for more than 50 years, so I believe I'm qualified to respond: Ms. Siegel, your dismissive and arrogant comment speaks to an ignorance so profound it should disqualify you from holding such an important job.

Those of us who cherish Greynolds indeed do not like the kind of change being proposed, changed that threatens to diminish the park's greatest gift to us all: tranquility.

Apparently it means little to Ms. Siegel that many people, *thousands* of people, would be appalled at the intrusion of a hulking mass of a building looming over the park. Apparently the only things that matter to her are 1) what the city council did in approving the project was technically legal, and 2) the project will put money in the city's bank account, ensuring that her handsome salary will not be interrupted.

With comments like that from public "servants," is it any wonder confidence in government is at an all-time low?

*Stephen Meyers  
Aventura*

#### Greynolds Park: Courageous Man vs. Shortsighted Greedheads

Kudos to Charles Baron for filing the lawsuit that may stop the City of North Miami Beach from ruining Greynolds Park. He is a selfless and courageous man.

Let's hope he wins big. (I also hope *Biscayne Times* will follow up on the case.)

Greynolds Park is a treasure for everyone in South Florida. We can't let shortsighted, greedy people permanently spoil it.

*Elizabeth J. Thompson  
Miami*

#### Gaspar, Do Not Despair! The Book Barn Beckons

Gaspar González complains about the disappearance of used bookstores in the Miami area ("No Country for Old Books," June 2013). Well, there is still at least one doing business.

It's called the Book Barn Book Exchange, on Bird Road around SW 107th Avenue. It is small, but it's exactly what Gaspar described: used books packed from floor to ceiling — and then some.

*Kevin Rodriguez  
Miami*

**Editor's note:** The Book Barn Book Exchange, owned by Susan Loiacono, is located at 10597 SW 40th St. (Bird Road), 305-223-0531.

#### Gaspar, Do Keep Writing! We Need Your Voice — in Biscayne Park and Beyond

I am writing this letter in appreciation of Gaspar González's contributions to *Biscayne Times*. Gaspar is a talented writer and social historian, and he has taught me much about the role of South Florida, and especially Miami, in American cultural history.

His articles on meeting E. Howard Hunt, the Ivan Tors studios, Bunny Yeager, and the piece on Roy Wright's shop and RCA stereos were filled with wonderful descriptions of times and places and events that returned me to my childhood and teenage years.

His descriptions of the local politics of Biscayne Park, where I live as Gaspar's neighbor and friend, were amusing and informative. Gaspar's writing is one of the main reasons I read *Biscayne Times*.

I have always been a little surprised at the personal vehemence of some of Gaspar's critics, as shown in letters that were published by the *BT*. Generally their comments seemed to go overboard.

One recent detractor of a column Gaspar wrote critiquing Miami drivers ("Car Trouble," May 2013) even

.....  
*Continued on page 12*



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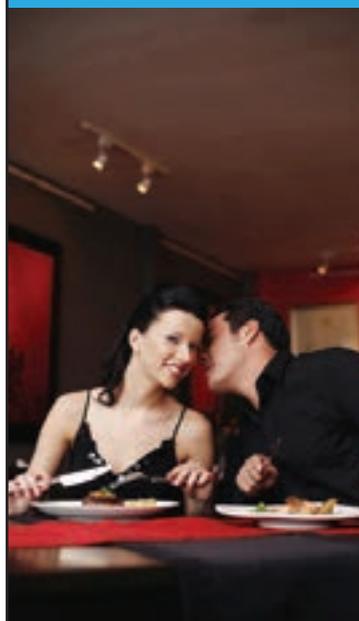
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## Commentary: LETTERS

### Letters

Continued from page 10

suggested that Gaspar move to some other town if he didn't like this one! Really? Someone who is willing to defend Miami drivers! Wow! I wonder how often this fellow gets out of Biscayne Park!

But seriously, we need writers who have the courage to speak out about our culture's strengths and weaknesses. Just recently, with the revelations of the NSA warrantless surveillance programs, even the most conservative media have begun to acknowledge that they didn't anticipate the extent to which the Patriot Act stripped most Americans of essential privacies that seemed to be enshrined in the Constitution.

At the time of that bill's passage, there was a strong movement in protest. But those critics of the Patriot Act were virtually shouted down: How could anyone be against the "patriot" act unless they are not a patriot?

We need writers like Gaspar who are willing to put a voice to many of the concerns we all share about the problems in our communities. Unlike many of the media voices that seem to scream about one extreme solution or another, Gaspar's voice has always been a gentle, moderate voice of reason and good humor. We need more voices like his, right here in our community.

*Tom Ferstles  
Biscayne Park*

### Hidden in Plain Sight: Miami's Rich Architectural History

Thank you for opening our eyes and allowing us to really see what's been standing right in front of us for ages.

I'm referring to "Steel, Stone, Glass," the excerpts from *Pocket Guide to Miami Architecture* by Judith Paine McBrien (May 2013).

I was particularly taken with the downtown buildings I've seen countless times without having a clue about their history.

The Alfred I. duPont Building (168 E. Flagler St.) is a treasure! That ornate grillwork, its soaring vertical lines, the fact that it is the only Art Deco/Depression Moderne high-rise in the downtown area — who knew?

At a time when our skyline is changing so rapidly, it is valuable to assess what we already have. The duPont, the Ingraham Building, the Seybold Arcade,

and many other striking downtown structures have withstood the test of time and have earned our respect.

I wonder how many of those towering condos will do the same.

*Janice A. Woodruff  
Miami*

### To Preserve and Protect Biscayne Bay

Thanks to *Biscayne Times* and especially Jim W. Harper for a thoughtfully written article about Miami's aquatic preserves ("A Great Bay," May 2013). They are managed and preserved on behalf of the people of Miami-Dade County and the people of Florida, who sought its protection in the 1970s.

We only hope that people will grow to love and appreciate Biscayne Bay all the more having learned a little more about it from this article.

Kudos and thanks again for providing this service to our community.

*Pamela Sweeney, manager  
Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserves  
Office of Coastal and Aquatic  
Managed Areas  
Florida Department of Environmental  
Protection  
Miami*

### Dear Frank: Old Crackers Like Us Should Stick Together

Can I write this directly to Frank Rollason? It's about his columns in general, his tone and old-school attitude, which I like.

So Frank, I, like you, am a Florida native, or as we prefer "cracker." What a shame that we can't refer to ourselves as we really are without making it sound as if it were politically incorrect.

I'm in with you on your recent columns, from the Tamiami Trail to the Dolphins football team to ethics in government. Thankfully there are still some people like you out there.

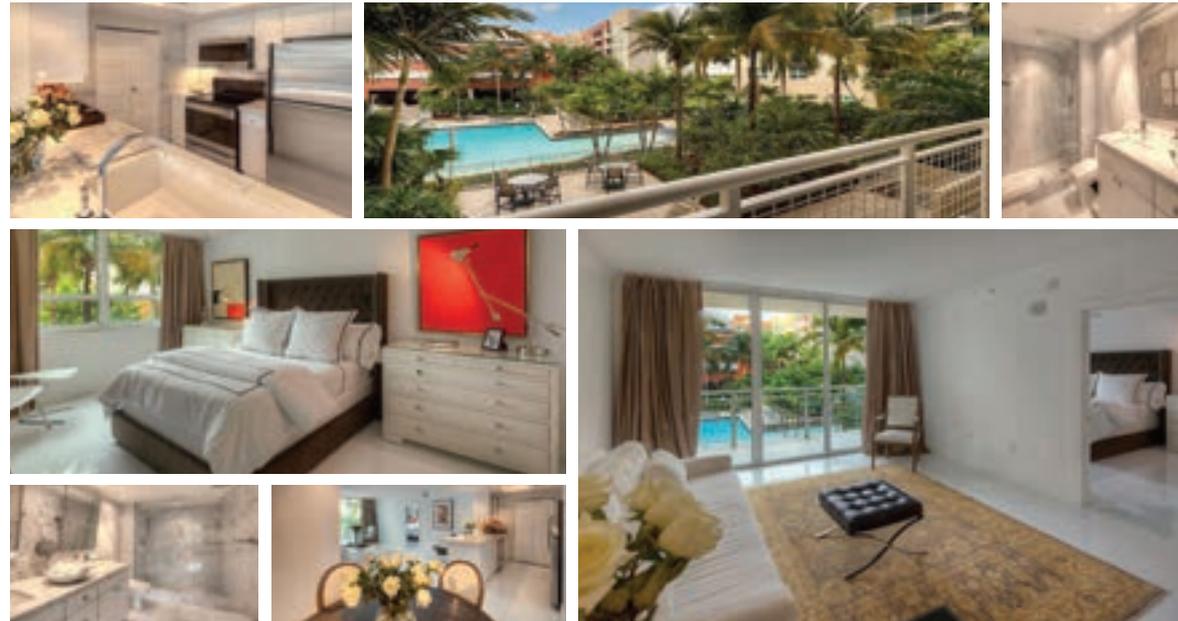
I'd like to share a moment in time with you.

In 1980 I was heading back to school at Eckerd College in St. Pete, on the old State Road 84 — long before this new behemoth morphed into the mess that it is now — when I saw a couple of cowboys on horseback in Davie, moseying down the road with six-guns on their belts, just living life, watching the herd. They weren't out to kill anybody, and we were in the middle of nowhere at that time. They were just doing what "crackers" used to do.

*Jim Smith  
Miami Shores*

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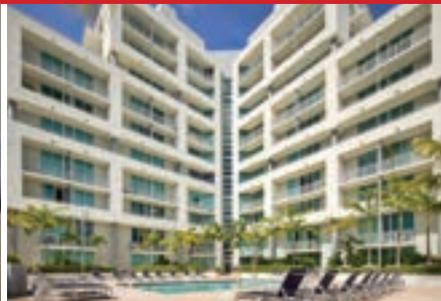
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# BizBuzz

Sales, special events, and more from the people who make Biscayne Times possible

By Pamela Robin Brandt  
BT Contributor

Spending the summer isolated inside cocoons of air conditioning, experiencing little contact with the sweltering realities of the outside world — it sure gets a person to thinking creatively.

Here's our latest idea: Let's start a movement to get a Seven Meter Dash designated as an official competition event as part of the 2016 Summer Olympics. Seven meters, we figure, is about the length of the typical Miamian's main summer sport: the sprint between one's air-conditioned home or office and one's air-conditioned car. So we've been training already for our whole lives!

Regarding gold, silver, and bronze medals, no way a Team USA of Miami locals wouldn't totally clean up.

To insure that those Olympic soccer wimps are eating their hearts out, though, we should intensify our training. And as always, BT advertisers are happy to help, with loads of deals on shopping, eating, entertainment, self-improvement, and much more — enough to lure you to the outside world doing the Seven Meter Dash till you really feel the burn.

Since it's now Miami Spa Month (which is actually two months long, July 1-August 31), we recommend that your first Seven Meter Dash be from car to NuLife Institute (1040 Biscayne Blvd., 8th floor;

305-400-0005), an advanced new medical facility that's celebrating with four services specially priced at just \$99: the signature "Body Contouring Detox Wrap" to tone, tighten, sculpt, and transform the coetaneous appearance of all that nasty cellulite; the fundamental NuLife facial, including a hyaluronic mask for amazing youthful skin; a revolutionary noninvasive "hydracial" that hydrates, exfoliates, and adds nutrients; and a "Pre-Event Plump & Glow" that'll have you looking like a star on the Olympic podium. And all without breaking a sweat.

For those seeking to stay cool mentally as well as physically, **Daily Offering Yoga** (305-456-9406), whose new studio, after years of conducting outdoor classes in Legion Park, is at 6901 Biscayne Blvd., is offering two featured workshops. On July 27-28, the gentle yet deep "Achieve Inner Peace Through Breath & Meditation" is designed to release blocked energies/emotions, and promote self-healing. And a longer Yoga 101 series, every Monday night, is recommended for anyone interested in yoga but unsure how to begin.

For conditions like clinical depression, schizophrenia, or Alzheimer's disease, maladies that go beyond the scope of spa or self-healing remedies, a new advertiser brings hope and an opportunity. **Miami Jewish HealthSystems and Comprehensive Clinical Development** (5200 NE 2nd Ave., 305-514-8710) have



David Laurenzo with brothers Bobby and Jamie Deen.

partnered to evaluate central-nervous-system medications and are offering people ages 66-90, with mild Alzheimer's, a chance to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational drug. Qualified participants receive free study-related medical care, memory testing, exams, and routine lab work, as well as possible compensation for time and travel. Call for further information.

Remember Dorothy Parker's old witicism about how men don't make passes at girls who wear glasses? Well, it was never really funny, and fortunately nowadays it needn't be even remotely true, if you get your eyeglasses at new advertiser **Next Level Optical** (14711 Biscayne Blvd., 305-949-2684). A concept of local board-certified optician Elliot Touati, the new full-service facility combines cutting-edge optical technology with today's most popular eyewear styles (for kids as well as adults), proving that respect for medical needs can co-exist

with respect for aesthetic tastes.

Hate paying retail for eyeglasses? No problem! You just need a cousin in the business, and that would be new advertiser **USA Optical** (17096 W. Dixie Hwy., 786-486-5294). As noted in this issue's ad, Dr. Adam Perlman, a board-certified optometric physician, provides the medical expertise; an on-premises lab provides the eyewear; and the ad's coupons provide discounts of 25% off regular glasses and 40% off designer sunglasses.

Naturally, sprinting between air-conditioned cocoons doesn't work if your car's A/C is on the fritz. And sadly, this month's offers from **Munich Autohaus** (12400 NE 13th Pl., 305-893-5958) only apply to BMWs and Mini-Coopers, but they're steal deals: 15% off any A/C repair, or a coolant flush for just \$60.

Hiding out in air-conditioned interiors to avoid the heat doesn't work, either, when

Continued on page 18



## RIVERWOOD CONDO

19420 NE 26 AV #121C Gated & secure townhome boasts 2bd/2ba, soaring wood beamed ceilings, open loft style living, eat-in kitchen, ss appliances, newer baths. Security system, hurricane shutters, impact windows and charming tropical landscaping. **ASKING \$150,000 OR \$1,650/MONTH.**

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### Morningside adorable 2be/1ba condo \$199,000

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**William Harbour** 786 247 1185



### Icon Brickell 1bedroom with park and bay views \$510,000

Peaceful sixth floor one bedroom overlooking quiet tree lined park with fabulous south views to the bay and Key Biscayne Bridge. Offering all possible amenities with an amazing pool deck, fabulous spa and gym and steps from the Brickell financial community.

**William Harbour** 786 247 1185



### Ios on the Bay 2bedroom corner \$465,000

Architectural gem! Ultramoderne 5-story boutique residence right on the bay with a fabulous bayfront pool. This 1398 sq ft cutting-edge corner unit has huge indoor/outdoor living areas with high ceilings and lots of light!

**Marie-Charlotte Piro** 305 495 6539



### Vizcayne 2level loft \$1900/month

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**William Harbour** 786 247 1185



### Icon Brickell rentals

The best location and best amenities on Brickell!

- West-facing, beautifully furnished 1Bed \$2500/month.
- 52nd floor 1bed with amazing bay views \$2300/month

**William Harbour** 786 247 1185



### 1800 Club 3bedroom rentals with unparalleled bay views

Great bayfront location with Incredible 320 degree panoramic views, 3 balconies, 2200 sq ft 3bed/3ba. Full service building .

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- 32nd floor, fully furnished with Brazilian oak wood floors \$4900/month

**William Harbour** 786 247 1185

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## Our Sponsors: JULY 2013

### BizBuzz

Continued from page 16

your home's power goes out during hurricanes. But you can stay cool by preparing with a visit to **Joe Blair Garden Supply** (320 NE 79th St., 305-757-5554). This issue's ad special is an Echo professional-grade chain saw, but the store carries much more than garden supplies; they also sell top-quality generators by Honda and Briggs & Stratton — and they service generators, too. In the event of a hit, the shop also extends its hours before and after the storm.

During the months when one's main interaction with the great outdoors is through your windows, you want the glass sparkling clean. And while many window-cleaning companies, or even a bottle of spray stuff, can deal with regular schmutz, they can't deal with, to use the technical term in this month's message from **Window Gang** (6005 NW 6th Ave., 305-756-0349), "white gunk" — mineral deposits. The Gang's advice: Don't waste time and money trying to pressure clean. Just give them a call and get your view brightened right. (They clean blinds/shades and storm-clogged gutters, too.)

Looking for a new abode — perhaps a condo, where much maintenance is done for you — and even much of your social life comes automatically without leaving home, thanks to fabulous building amenities? Look no further than **The Crimson** (601 NE 27th St., 1-855-389-8337), a new advertiser and high-style new residence right on Biscayne Bay in Edgewater. The one, two, and three-bedroom units all have large terraces/balconies — big enough for entertaining. See this issue's ad for glimpses of the pool deck, water views, and lush landscaping, and go to [www.crimsonmiami.com](http://www.crimsonmiami.com) for more info.

No doubt you'll be wanting some equally sleek new furniture, and you can find that conveniently just a few blocks away at new advertiser **Elemento Furniture** (2691 NE 2nd Ave., 786-600-3910). Visit [www.elementofurniture.com](http://www.elementofurniture.com) for a preview of the company's striking modern designs.

If your décor tastes run more to exotica, don't miss this month's grand opening sale at **Oriental Décor** (7226 Biscayne Blvd., 305-576-4727). You can check out a sampling of their bewitching stock at [www.orientaldecorusa.com](http://www.orientaldecorusa.com), and if the preview gets you thinking about a one-of-a-kind piece just for you, customized orders are available.

Speaking of settling in to a new home: Our congratulations to Martine Miller at **Miller Healthcare Network** on the opening of a new Broward County branch office: 2455 Hollywood Blvd. #100, Hollywood, FL 33020. That said, you needn't schlep to said office. The Miller network, which has a full range of compassionate care for seniors who want to remain in their own homes (via caregivers providing everything from cooking, running errands, and hospital-sitting to CPR and simple companionship) will come to you for a free home evaluation. Call 786-663-9790, or go to [www.NeedCareAtHome.com](http://www.NeedCareAtHome.com).

Congratulations are also in order for **Laurenzo's Italian Center** (16385 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-945-6381), on an anniversary: 63 years in business! David Laurenzo and the family will be celebrating from July through September with special sales, some detailed in this issue's ad, plus others he just sent to this column. Unfortunately there isn't room to print them all, but we'll say this: 1) Both prices and quality are astonishing — like \$3.49 per lb. for Laurenzo's original (since 1951) homemade Italian sausage; and 2) if you make off with the last sausage before we get there, we'll just have to kill you.

Here's an insider tip from **Piccolo Pizza** (2104 NE 123rd St., 305-893-9550) about an item invented to satisfy the most powerful cravings: the Calboli, invented by Piccolo's pizza wizard Hubert Benmoussa. It's *not* on the menu, but ask and you'll receive a golden-brown-crust calzone/stromboli combination stuffed with gooey cheese and your choice of 15 additional fillings. It's just \$6.99 on this month's lunch-specials menu.

To satisfy even bigger appetites, hit **Kitchen 305** (16701 Collins Ave., 305-749-2110) on Wednesday or Friday nights for summer's all-you-can-eat seafood feasts. Fridays feature king crab for \$49.95; Wednesdays feature Maine lobster for an amazing \$38. Dinners come with soup or salad and classic shore sides. Best reserve early. The place, understandably, gets packed.

One thing we really enjoy is patronizing a neighborhood business that clearly, for the owner, is not just a business but a labor of love. Another thing we really enjoy is wine. And you'll find both at new advertiser **Time for Wine** (2200 NE 2nd Ave., 786-409-4898), a new market plus wine/tapas bar that's already sparking a neighborhood feel

in its still-ungentrified area of Wynwood. Prices are comparable to those at impersonal warehouses, but the atmosphere is warm, and owner David Taboada is happy to advise you whether you want wine to go or want to hang out over a bottle/glass and some simple, tasty tapas.

Summer is practically a synonym for sushi, in our opinion — so light that going to a sushi bar is nearly as effective at helping you look bathing-suit-fit as going to a spa. At new advertiser **Sumo Sushi Bar & Grill** (17630 Collins Ave., 305-682-1243), there's the element of summer fun, too. The longtime Sunny Isles Beach Japanese favorite does serve limited Thai and Chinese food, too, but the place just about started the trend, years ago, of totally over-the-top makis. When you want not just tempura flakes, or cream cheese, or spicy mayo, but all the above, this is where to go. We recommend the Pink Lady: shrimp tempura, avocado, masago, cilantro, spicy mayo, and a scallop-packed topping of "dynamite" sauce cascading over all.

Here's another way to achieve that bathing-suit fit: Liposonix. No, it's not something you put on headphones and listen to, but it does involve sound — ultrasound. The professionals at **Horwitz Dermatology** (2999 NE 199th St., Penthouse One, 305-933-1151) want to introduce you to their new high-tech treatment that uses ultrasound to permanently destroy tummy fat right below the surface — works on love handles too. Make an appointment for a free consultation to learn more, including the fact that you'll get noticeable results after just one treatment.

At **Bagels & Company** this month, owner David Cohen is offering a different eat-in lunch special every weekday, all meals including beverage and sides. Our personal favorite is Friday's nova "appetizer" (in quotes because it's enough for lunch and a doggie-bag breakfast the next morning). But really, at David's prices, you can enjoy lunch out all week. Consult this issue's ad for the mouthwatering details.

There's no meal that says "par-TAY!" like fondue — food and entertainment rolled into one, for family fun. And if you take seriously the old tradition that those losing their dipping bread or meat in the fondue pot must kiss your neighbors, it's a great date meal, too. Fortunately we live in a town that's home to the USA's most renowned fondue specialist, **The Melting Pot** (15700 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-2228), where a new customizable menu makes it possible to enjoy anything from just a light summer repast of classic cheese fondue to

a full four-course fondue feast featuring cheese, meats/seafoods, and chocolate. The restaurant is now celebrating its remodel with a Monday-Friday happy hour (\$5 fondues and drink deals). And there's a *very* special offer for readers during July, too: Just mention the *BT* for \$15 off a romantic dinner for two.

Looking for something to do with the kids that's stimulating but not sweat-inducing — or budget-busting? Come to the free Family Fun Day at **History Miami** (101 W. Flagler St., 305-375-1492), a museum that people of all ages love. Fun Day, which runs from noon-5:00 p.m. on July 13, is tied to the museum's latest exhibition, "Opa-locka: Mirage City." Which is a good adult description. Kids will think the buildings in this fantastical city look like something from a fairy tale — which they are! The exhibit runs through September 8, but Fun Day adds interactive creative elements, like constructing your own fanciful building façades, or if you're feeling athletic, a walking tour of Flagler Street.

Finally, future Olympians, remember this: The sprint from one's air-conditioned home to the cool waters of your backyard pool is about a Seven Meter Dash, too. But you won't want to attempt it if said pool is infested with iguanas — and that's a real danger this month, according to a most intriguing message from Tom Portuallo at **Blue Iguana Pest Control** ([www.iguanacontrol.com](http://www.iguanacontrol.com), 855-525-5656). Now, normally we rewrite our advertisers' "BizBuzz" submissions to keep style consistent, but since this month's column focuses on how summer stimulates creative thinking, we couldn't possibly do any better at proving the point than Tom's own words: "The key point for July is that iguanas are very active now — digging holes to undermine seawalls, floating in pools while sipping their favorite drink, 'Blue Hawaiian,' planning parties in your roof's crawl space, and betting each other which child will run the fastest when they jump out from behind the bushes. We thwart their efforts by crashing their parties in our iguana suits, yelling, 'German Shepherd!' running up behind them while making barking noises as they leap into the water, and turning the hose on so their drinks become watery. Nothing frustrates an iguana more."

*Something special coming up at your business? Send info to [bizbuzz@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:bizbuzz@biscaynetimes.com). For BT advertisers only.*

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Miami FL



TWO YOUNG MURDER SUSPECTS TELL SHERIFF OF AIRLINE STEWARD'S DEATH  
... Sheriff Thomas J. Kelly, left, listens to Charles Lawrence and Lewis R. Killen



RE-ENACTING FLIGHT FROM MURDER SCENE  
... Police Chief Earl Engel of North Miami with Lawrence



YOUTH SHOWS WHERE HE HID AT SHOOTING  
... Sgt. Thurman, Killen, Deputy Bud Thompson and Fred Jones

Heat Hikes  
Revenues  
On Water

No Need for Blues  
By Department Heads  
By DON CLAPROOD

**The  
Town  
Crier**

By JACK BELL  
BLOWING ROCK, N.C. —  
"Daddy"—the voice over the  
phone was that of Sharon, 10,  
our irrepressible older daugh-

# 2 Brazen Youths Re-Enact Of Airline Steward in Nort

# Homo Hysteria

Not so long ago, Miami's daily newspapers declared war on homosexual "perverts"

By Antolin García Carbonell

In the early morning hours of August 3, 1954, a North Miami couple visiting a lovers' lane off Biscayne Boulevard near NE 135th Street discovered the body of young man lying in a pool of blood.

The North Miami Police Department found the victim's 1950 cream-colored Chevrolet convertible several hundred yards away, with bloodstains on the front seat and a .22-caliber bullet casing on the floor. The victim had been shot in the torso and bled to

death as he staggered from the car and then collapsed. His wallet was missing, and the footprints of a barefoot man led away from the crime scene toward Arch Creek.

Starting with the car's registration and initials inside the victim's University of

Kentucky class ring, police confirmed his identity as that of an Eastern Air Lines steward, William Theodore Simpson. He was 27 years old, had worked for Eastern since joining its Miami-based flight-attendant training program in 1951, and had



returned to Miami the previous night from Detroit. He had stopped off briefly at his rented apartment in the 2200 block of NE 4th Avenue and left around 10:00 p.m.

When questioned, the stewardess and steward who had worked the flight with Simpson told police detectives he'd been looking forward to a date that evening but hadn't named the individual. The steward, a former roommate, added that Simpson had once been engaged and had a reputation as a ladies' man.

The tragic story of his shooting, accompanied by photographs of Simpson's well-dressed body and maps of the murder scene, made front-page news for the next two days in the *Miami Herald* and the *Miami Daily News*.

Analysis of the .22-caliber bullet showed that it had been fired from a Beretta, so police detectives questioned everyone known to own such a gun. They also questioned Simpson's landlady, his neighbors, and patrons and

bartenders at the nightspots he frequented, trying to retrace his steps that evening, find his date, and perhaps uncover a motive for the murder.

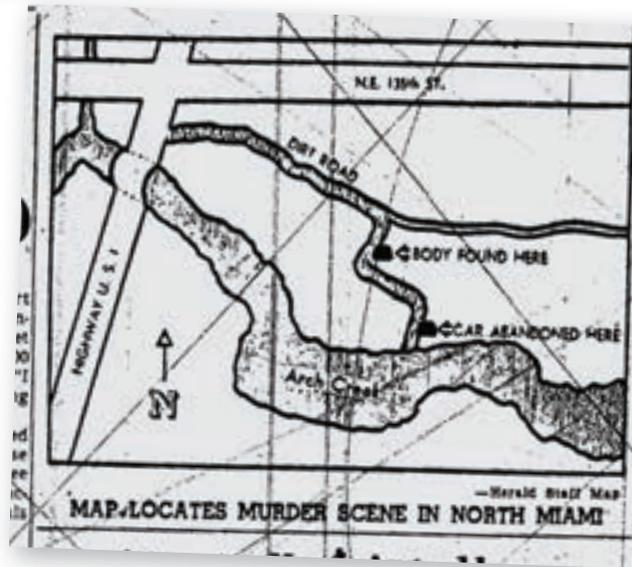
Three days after the slaying, North Miami Police Det. Wayne Thurman received a tip that Charles Lawrence, a 19-year-old stockroom employee at Bell Telephone, owned a Beretta. Lawrence was brought in for questioning and admitted that he'd been hitchhiking on Biscayne Boulevard the night of the shooting. Simpson had stopped and offered him a ride, but then had driven to an isolated spot and made improper advances, he said. While resisting those advances, Lawrence had pulled out a gun and fired in self-defense.

Simpson's neighbors, however, told detectives something else. For several months, they had seen a young man hitchhiking on Biscayne Boulevard around 23rd Street. Whenever the young man was picked up, they reported, a green car that had been parked on a side street would pull out and follow. Lawrence was questioned again and admitted that a friend of his, 20-year-old Lewis Killen, was the driver of the green car. Using the hitchhiking ruse, the duo had been "rolling" gay men for many weeks.

"Simpson started to get nervous," Lawrence told police this time, though he still maintained that an unwanted sexual advance had occurred. "I think he heard Lewis coming up in the other car. He started to get ready to step on the starter. I got out and drew the Beretta. I didn't mean to shoot him. I meant to fire through the windshield and frighten him and keep him there. I must have hit him."

Lawrence and Killen were arrested and charged with first-degree murder because of the additional circumstances of the robbery. But the tone of the coverage was about to shift and transform Simpson into something other than the handsome, clean-cut, well-employed, and personable victim the newspapers had initially described.

The day after the arrests were first reported, the *Miami*



*News* published a front-page article under the headline "Pervert Colony Uncovered in Simpson Murder Probe." The story revealed that, while investigating the steward's shooting, police had uncovered a "colony of some 500 male homosexuals, congregated mostly in the near-downtown northeast section and ruled by a 'queen.'" The colony, of which Simpson was said to be a member, lay "north of NE 20th Street and east of Biscayne Boulevard, running to Biscayne Bay, with 'the boys' living in many of the apartment houses and rooming houses of the neighborhood," the great majority of whose residents "are not even aware of the proclivities of their neighbors."

Above the story, the newspaper ran a photograph of Charles Lawrence smiling as he showed a sheriff's investigator where he had tossed the murder weapon, not far from the crime scene. Further inside, an essay under the headline "Good Guys — Not Toughs" was written by a high school friend of the accused men, who, in trying to divine what lay behind the crime, explained that one of the two had been going

through recent financial hardship while the other's longstanding "hatred of homosexuals" was based on some vaguely referenced experiences dating from his hitchhiking days in high school.

The *Herald* joined in that day with a photo essay under the headline "Brazen Youths Re-Enact Murder of Airline Steward in North Miami," depicting the two accomplices as they strode through the murder scene with police officers, practically boasting of shooting the "pervert."

According to Fred Fejes, a professor of multimedia studies at Florida Atlantic University, who has extensively researched the subject, the next day "the *Herald* quickly replaced Simpson as the object of sympathy." The paper ran another story, this one centered on Killen's distraught wife of four months, 18-year-old Donna. Under a series of photographs of her tear-streaked face, she told a reporter that her husband "read the Bible and didn't drink." They

Continued on page 22

## Hysteria

Continued from page 21

were active in their church. "Why did this happen to us?" she asked.

Casting herself and her husband as the real victims, Donna Killen blamed Miami for allowing "perverts" to ruin their lives even as she added that the two men had "got their idea [of targeting gay men in the area for money] from friends at high school. A lot of them do that." In her view, which the *Herald* took up as a civic cause, places like Bayfront Park, where "such people" congregated freely, lay at the root of the incident.

The *Herald* also upped the estimate of the local gay population with the headline "5000 Here Perverts, Police Say," over a story claiming that "at least 20 bars catered to them." By August 11, the paper reported that the more accurate population number was 8000 and ran a front-page essay it had commissioned from Miami Police Lt. Chester Eldredge, chief of the city's homicide division. The perverts ranged, he said, "from the relatively harmless homosexual to the fierce sadist who horribly mutilates and tortures his victim."



CHARLES LAWRENCE



LEWIS KILLEN

**Charles Lawrence and Lewis Killen: They practically boasted about killing the "pervert."**

Thus began a vitriolic campaign led by the *Herald* and the *News* against Miami-area gays that peaked several months after Simpson's murder. By then, it wasn't so much that the steward had been robbed and killed, but that he might have been in some way responsible for the events leading up to his shooting.

Local media and politicians presumed that gays were responsible for sex crimes against children, suffered from

psychological and moral failings, and by the very nature of their orientation presented the opportunity for crimes perpetrated against them. Distinctions between the terms "homosexual" and "pervert" or "child molester" were not understood by the general public. However, one thing was certain, according to Lieutenant Eldredge: They should be segregated for treatment and to "protect the normal individual from having to

associate with the abnormal."

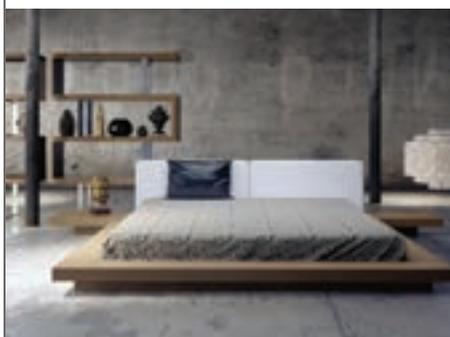
FAU's Fejes says he uses the campaign in his classroom to illustrate how media outlets, through the use of relentless and stigmatizing coverage, can effectively obstruct the acceptance of marginalized groups. His treatise, "Murder, Perversion, and Moral Panic: The 1954 Media Campaign Against Miami's Homosexuals and the Discourse of Civic Betterment," published in July 2000 in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, is the most comprehensive account of these events.

Although Simpson had been an Eastern employee for nearly four years, the airline declined to issue a public statement, and his death passed without mention in the obituary column of Eastern's bimonthly *Great Silver Fleet Magazine*. An uncle arranged for the transport of his body and burial with the honors due a veteran U.S. Army sergeant at Zachary Taylor National Cemetery in Louisville.

The local papers also downplayed the victim's association with his employer, and for good reason: At the time, Eastern

Continued on page 24

# ELEMENTO FURNITURE



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# Move On! Move in! Move Now!



### Aqua - 217 Zoe Way - Miami Beach

Breathtaking Modern 5 bed/5 bath +2 half bath townhome over 5,349 sq. ft. on gated private Aqua Island. Finished to the finest detail and features soaring 20 ft. + ceilings, water views, gourmet kitchen, exquisite woodwork, large master suite & multiple terraces. **\$5,700,000** - [www.217ZoeWay.com](http://www.217ZoeWay.com)



### Aqua - 211 Aqua Terrace - Miami Beach

Elegantly finished Modern Townhouse on gated & private Aqua Island. 4 bed 5.5 bath, 4,584 sq ft with stunning open kitchen, private elevator, high ceilings and water views down the Intracoastal. Simply spectacular. **\$3,700,000**



### Aqua - 215 Ari Way - Miami Beach

Private 3 bed 3.5 bath, 3883 sq ft townhome offering spacious living, open kitchen & multiple living areas. High ceilings, 4th floor office/study, amenities include 2 pools, spa & fitness, business center & clubhouse. **\$2,199,000**



### 5335 La Gorce Drive - Miami Beach

Amazing Contemporary Mediterranean home, totally re-done with 4 bed/3.5 bath 3,228 sq. ft. Features saltwater pool home, courtyard entertaining space, master suite w/ huge balcony, impact windows, gourmet kitchen, hardwood floors. **\$1,848,000**



### 4410 Sheridan Avenue - Miami Beach

5 bed/4 bath, 3,109 sq. ft. Exquisitely renovated Art Deco contemporary home with a separate one bed guest house. Beautiful garden & pool area. New kitchen with gas stove. Amazing inlaid terrazzo floors. **\$1,499,000**



### 4174 Alton Road - Miami Beach

Updated, sunny 4,220 sq. ft. 2 story Spanish style gated villa with 5 bed /4.5 bath. Huge master closet. Large entertaining areas, high ceilings, terrazzo & wood floors. Walk to everything. **Reduced \$1,295,000**



### Tower House - 5500 Collins Avenue - #1704 - Miami Beach

3 bed/3.5 bath w/2,868 sq. ft. Best views in the building. Deeded boat slip. **\$1,499,000**



### Absolut Lofts -245 Michigan Av- #LP6 South Beach

2 bed/2 bath with 1,741 sq. ft. 2 Story lower penthouse corner unit. Kobi Karp award design building. **\$847,000** - [www.obeo.com/671691](http://www.obeo.com/671691)



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## Hysteria

Continued from page 22

accounted for about 3000 local jobs, a third of the total major airline jobs in Miami, according to a University of Florida study conducted in 1947. Eastern Air Lines had been moving its operations and administration from New York to Miami in stages, starting with aircraft maintenance in 1935. Flight-attendant training followed in 1947.

The *News* and the *Herald* published some 53 articles and editorials address-

set up a residential concentration and meeting places with what amounts to police approval.”

What was behind the eruption of homophobia?

Actually, pressure had been brewing for nearly a year, according to Fejes. Tensions began in November 1953, in response to an incident in which an adult male was accused of “sadistically torturing” a young boy in Fort Lauderdale. The subsequent Greater Miami Crime Commission’s investigation concluded that Dade County was “open to maniacs”

and child molesters. With the newspapers hyperventilating, all the law enforcement agencies took part in raids on beaches and gay bars throughout Miami and Miami Beach, the latter of which passed laws outlawing female impersonators.

Word of the police raids and allegations of harassment reached *ONE* magazine in Los Angeles, the first nationwide pro-gay publication, which was sold on South Florida newsstands. *ONE*’s editors wrote letters of protest to police chiefs and sheriffs in Miami, Miami Beach, and Dade County, and to the *Herald*, arguing that homosexuals were not by their sexual orientation perverts or child molesters, and that respect and tolerance might result in better cooperation with law enforcement. The

magazine praised Miami Police Chief Headley for “refusing to wholeheartedly support the current hysteria.”

By January 1954, a semblance of calm seemed to return. The First Unitarian Church of Miami hosted a forum, among the first of its kind, featuring psychologists, members of the gay community, supportive clergy, and Miami Mayor Abe Aronovitz in a panel discussion titled “Homosexuality: Cause, Society and Crime.” The house was packed, according to Fejes, and *ONE*, which covered the event, “pointed to the evening as a model for future discussions.”

But Miami’s newspaper editors were unmoved, and continued to argue that tolerance would invite “perverts and



This editorial cartoon was captioned: “A Promotion We Can Do Without.”

ing Miami’s gay problem over the next six weeks, under headlines like “Clean This Place Up,” “Psychiatrist Looks at Deviates: A Disease Worse than Alcoholism,” and “Great Civilizations Plagued by Deviates.”

In Miami Beach, which held a significant gay population and gay nightlife, the police force had a reputation for antipathy toward and harassment of gays, as did the Dade County Sheriff’s Department. But the Miami Police Department under Chief Walter Headley had maintained a policy of relative tolerance, as had the *Herald* and the *News*.

Miami, however, was now acquiring a reputation as a “comfortable haven for homosexuals,” the *Herald* warned, taking aim at Headley. “No wonder they come here from all over the country to

Continued on page 26

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## Hysteria

Continued from page 24

deviants” to settle here, changing Miami from a family tourist paradise into a “Powder Puff Lane.”

Then in July 1954, just a month before Simpson was shot to death, another crime against a child occurred, providing politicians and editors with justification to resume their attacks on gays. Seven-year-old Judith Ann Roberts was abducted late at night from her grandparents’ southwest Miami house, where she was visiting with her family. The police found her body the next morning; she had been beaten, sexually assaulted, and killed.

The hunt for “perverts” was back on, and over five nights, seven known gay bars were raided, three of them within a one-block area of NE 1st Street in downtown Miami, another one on Le Jeune Road, and three more in the south part of Miami Beach. When circumstantial evidence began pointing to the possibility that the murderer was a family member, the papers dropped the story. But three weeks later, when it was confirmed that



The News uncovered a “colony of some 500 male homosexuals...ruled by a ‘queen.’”

the murdered William Simpson had been part of a “pervert colony,” the campaign of vilification heated up again.

The barrage of media coverage included examination of the problem of homosexuality and its causes, and — from a criminologist’s view — the best way to drive gays out of Miami. Both the *Herald* and the *News* saw

homosexuals’ presence as an “offense against the moral character of the city,” according to Fejes. It is interesting to note, as Fejes does, that the relentless newspaper campaign was not the result of pressure from community or religious leaders; in fact, he writes, during the summer of 1954, “there was no mention in the media of any role

played, or even a public statement by, local church leaders” to support the campaign against gays. It was of the newspapers’ own making.

By mid-August, editors were calling for the firing of Miami Police Chief Headley and city manager Arthur E. Evans, who supported his policy of not harassing gay establishments. It did not help his cause that Headley had said, “If I ran all the homosexuals out of town, members of some of the best families would lead the parade.” Tolerance, declared the *Herald*, was akin to “opening the gates to these people” and risked labeling the city as a haven for them.

Police ran more bar raids for the first two weeks of September, as well as a sweep of Bayfront Park. By mid-September, according to Fejes, the City of Miami was itself reacting to the media’s influence. Mayor Aronovitz introduced an ordinance before the city commission that would make it illegal for establishments holding liquor licenses to employ homosexuals or to permit homosexuals to congregate on their premises.

Continued on page 28

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## Hysteria

Continued from page 26

Satisfied with the city's new vigilance, and concerned that continuing coverage could further damage the Miami's tourist mecca image, the *Herald* and the *News* wound down their campaign. (The wording of the ordinance was later watered down to ban service to homosexuals, and was approved in mid-October, though several commissioners noted their reservations, writes Fejes, and one voted in opposition to it.)

Charles Lawrence and Lewis Killen's trial for first-degree murder lasted three days and was turned over to the jury for deliberations on Saturday, November 6, at 10:30 p.m. Just four hours later the jury returned with a reduced verdict of manslaughter for both defendants. The principal reasons for the lesser conviction, according to one of the jurors, were Simpson's homosexuality and the state's failure to prove premeditation. Later that week the presiding judge, Grady Crawford, sentenced Lawrence and Killen to the maximum penalty, 20 years.



Eastern Air Lines male flight attendants in training.

*ONE* magazine had chronicled with dismay the renewed outbreak of anti-gay hysteria and devoted an entire edition to the lurid stories published in Miami's newspapers. The magazine's editors also published an open letter to Mayor Aronovitz, asking him to stop the

homophobic campaign or face a boycott from gay visitors. Aronovitz replied that he was delighted *ONE* would discourage unwelcome visitors.

A few months later, another murder occurred. On the morning of January 5, 1955, the nude body of a 29-year-old

Great Silver Fleet Magazine

hairdresser, William B. Bishop, was found by his roommates, tied up on a divan in the Florida room of their Miami Beach apartment. He had been beaten, "sexually abused," and strangled. Bishop's gold watch, along with some clothes and five dollars in cash, were missing.

Using a generic hotel room key found at the murder scene and the eyewitness testimony of a barmaid employed at a bar on Collins Avenue and 74th Street, the trail quickly led to a 21-year-old Korean War veteran from New Jersey, Thomas Francis McDonald. It was a near replay of the Simpson murder, including both McDonald's claim that he had acted in response to Bishop's unwelcome sexual advances, and a plea from McDonald's wife for her troubled husband.

This time, however, the *News* and *Herald* ran short articles on inside pages. The *Herald* downplayed the stories under generic headlines: "Murder Suspect Hunted" and "Murder Charged to Vet in Beach Slaying."

The *News* also pushed its stories back to less prominent inside pages,

Continued on page 30

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P R O P E R T I E S

## Hysteria

Continued from page 28

but continued to exploit the salacious elements of the story with headlines such as “Bound, Gagged Beautician Is Found Dead” over a story that included details like the (beautician’s) nude body “trussed with handkerchiefs,” a desk “littered with books about homosexuals,” the “dressing gown sash” that bound the victim’s hands, and information that the dead man’s roommates were a florist and a hairdresser.

Within days, McDonald was indicted for first-degree murder and the papers seemed to lose interest in the story. In May, Grady Crawford, the same judge who presided over the Simpson murder trial, dismissed McDonald’s insanity defense. He was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. Absent a child molestation and homophobic agenda, justice seemed to run its course quietly.

In his book *Plane Queer: Labor, Sexuality, and AIDS in the History of Male Flight Attendants*, historian



Donna Killen argues that she and her husband are the real victims.

Phil Tiemeyer of Philadelphia University argues that, as a result of months of sensational coverage, Eastern Air Lines temporarily stopped hiring male flight-attendant trainees. A flight-attendant class scheduled for November 1954 included one male applicant, Pedro Muñiz, who was already in the pipeline when the Simpson scandal broke. Muñiz was allowed to continue only after friends

employed by Eastern vouched for his heterosexuality.

Even before Simpson’s murder, Eastern’s executives were considering phasing out male flight attendants. Airline rivals Delta and National had been cutting into Eastern’s market share with advertising campaigns that featured beautiful stewardesses. With slower turnover and the resulting pay increases

owing to seniority, stewards were no longer as cost-effective as they had been when introduced in the 1930s, according to Tiemeyer.

In the spring of 1955, Eastern unveiled an overhaul of its entire flight-training program. Newspaper advertisements invited single women to apply

Continued on page 32

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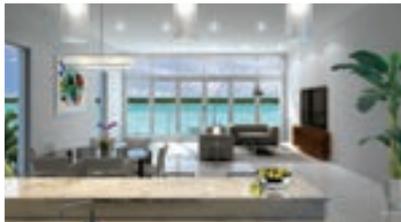


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## Hysteria

Continued from page 30

for five weeks of training to become an Eastern stewardess. Classes, with all expenses paid, were to be held at the luxurious Miami Springs Villas resort. In July 1955, the first Miami Springs Villas class of 24 graduated. It included seven men already working for Eastern, whose heterosexuality had been confirmed by their supervisors.

Eastern continued training stewards until 1958, but when the airline revamped its flight-attendant academy at Miami Springs Villas in 1963, the building did not include a men's restroom. After prospective male flight attendants successfully sued several major carriers, claiming sex discrimination, all airlines, including Eastern, resumed hiring stewards by the early 1970s.

As for the local media, both the *Herald* and *News* slowly became more circumspect in their coverage of the gay community, but they continued intermittent efforts to drive away the homosexuals through the mid-1960s.

Typical of these recurring offensives was an attack the *News* unleashed on its front page on February 27, 1956. A three-part series titled "Profits in Perversion" focused on exposing the bar operators who were prospering thanks to their gay clientele. Under the headline "Homosexuals Return, Find Heat's Off Again," the first article noted that "homosexuals are appearing openly again in Greater Miami and making money for the operators of clubs which cater to them. ... Several hundred — possibly more than 1000 — are here this winter and have found that the heat is off from a public protest campaign less than two years ago." A separate story told about gay men being rounded up and paying fines.

In addition, *News* reporters wrote, during their three-week investigation, they had visited seven bars in Miami and Miami Beach that had been raided during the 1954 purge. In every bar they were approached by men making "suggestive remarks."

The bars in question were the same ones that had been raided in 1954. The Samba Bar (220 NE 1st St.), Carnival Bar (137 NE 3rd Ave.), and Vick's Bar (39 NE 2nd Ave.) were within the same one-block area of downtown Miami that the YMCA and the Greyhound bus station were located. These bars were also a short distance from Bayfront Park.

Three Miami Beach bars — Club Benni (1610 Alton Rd.), the Circus Bar (401 Ocean Dr.) and Club Echo (1446 Ocean Dr.) — featured live entertainment and had been the target of the municipal ordinance outlawing female impersonators. The seventh bar, El Carol (930 Le Jeune Rd.), was located on the western edge of Miami. (Missing from the list was the Cactus Lounge at Biscayne Boulevard and NE 20th Terrace, within the "pervert colony" area. Curiously, it was never mentioned in conjunction with the raids, despite it



**The *Herald* invited a Miami cop to write an essay on perverts.**

being widely known as Miami's oldest gay bar.)

The *News* described one encounter: "A thin, balding man who had seen the reporter at several other places moved into a booth at the Carnival Bar asking, 'Haven't I seen you some place before?' He became annoyed when a suspected deviate tried to sit down, and said, 'I saw him first.'"

Part two of the series included the names and addresses of the gay-bar operators in Miami and Miami Beach. The article also quoted denials from top law enforcement officials that the situation was worsening. Miami Police Chief Headley said that although "we have more than our share," it was in proportion with the overall tourist influx. Dade County Sheriff Tom Kelly told reporters that "there is no increase in 'homos' ... downtown Miami is all cleaned up." The *News* countered with lower-ranking officers complaining that more gays were in fact coming to the city.

Faced with denials from law enforcement officers, the *News* got the message and moved its stories farther back in the

Continued on page 34

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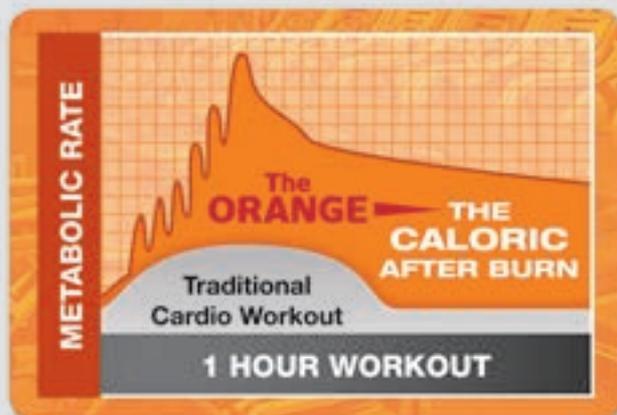
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## Hysteria

Continued from page 32

paper. Part three of "Profits in Perversion" included photographs of the homes of gay-bar owners. But the text rehashed all the "pervert menace" stories from 1954, and included quotes from Lt. Earl Owens, chief juvenile officer with the Miami Police Department, regarding a pending case involving a 15-year-old with gonorrhea who admitted to having sexual relations with six males who were free on bond and further spreading venereal disease.



**February 1956: The News revisits the pervert frenzy with gusto.**

The article maintained that the much-touted ordinance passed in 1954 was not being enforced and cited a bill approved by the state legislature in 1955 aimed at removing sex offenders (homosexuals) from general society but then failed to fund a facility to treat them. The series concluded by proposing a new state treatment and research facility affiliated with the departments of psychiatry at the University of Florida, University of Miami, and Florida State University.

The final installment of the *News* series also offered a hint of balance with the headline "Police Policies on Deviates Hit by Psychiatrist." An unnamed psychiatrist said that a strong law enforcement stand was ineffective: "You can't beat it out of him, or legislate it out." Nor would stiffer prison sentences change the situation. He also argued that the law was enforced far more harshly against gay men than against lesbians.

But only ten days later the *News* was again reporting that 30 men had been arrested in police sweeps over the three preceding weekends and charged

with lewd and lascivious conduct at Bayfront Park and the downtown Miami bus station. Similar coverage continued through the mid-1960s, again reaching frenzied levels during investigations of the murders of three gay men between November 1959 and November 1960. One of the murder victims, 56-year-old Charles Joseph Mourey, was the former butler of silent film star Hope Hampton. His murder had many parallels with Simpson's, including the date, almost six years to the day. He was shot with two .22-caliber bullets and his body was also found on a dirt road leading to a lovers' lane, this one off NW 7th Avenue and 157th Street. His murderer, who was finally identified in 1984, turned out to have been a 17-year-old student at North Miami High School at the time of the assault.

**O**n January 17, 1977, Dade County Commissioner Ruth Shack sponsored an ordinance banning discrimination based on sexual orientation, which the commission approved. The *Herald* initially backed the proposal in an unsigned editorial, but ten days later the paper's executive editor, John

McMullan, in "An Editor's Comments" column, expressed his concern "that this was a manufactured issue concocted by those...more interested in flaunting their new deviate freedom than in preventing discrimination."

After singer Anita Bryant launched a campaign to overturn the ordinance, the *News* backed her position in a March 1977 editorial. The *Herald* also reversed itself in an editorial titled "An Unneeded Ordinance," published just before the referendum.

By June 1977, Bryant's campaign had won, and the discrimination ban was repealed by a margin of 69 to 31 percent, making Miami-Dade the first municipality in the nation to repeal civil rights protection for gays and lesbians. On the upside, the repeal resulted in a surge of gay-rights activism on both the local and national levels.

In December 1998, when Miami-Dade County Commissioner Katy Sorenson reintroduced the gay-rights ordinance, the *News* was no longer in business, but the *Herald* supported the effort in an editorial headlined "The Politics of Inclusion."

*Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com*

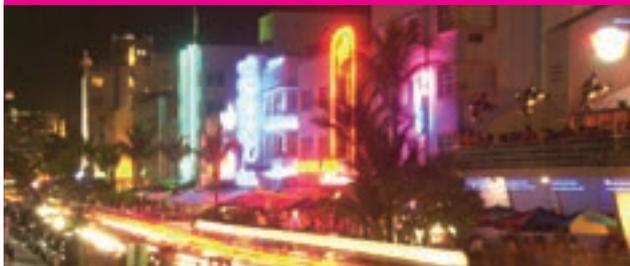


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# Bright Idea

Wynwood property owners are trying to do what the city and FPL have failed to do — shine a light on the neighborhood

By Erik Bojnansky  
BT Senior Writer

On the second Saturday night of every month, the streets of the Wynwood Arts District are crammed with people in search of art, food, drinks, music, and general amusement.

But go to Wynwood after dark on a weekday, when no special events are planned, and you'll find a very different place. On this particular Wednesday night, the *BT* sees only a handful of people walking along NW 2nd Avenue, a major thoroughfare in the neighborhood.

Walk farther west and the area resembles the set of a horror movie. The 30-foot-tall, cobra-head-style streetlights

provide dim and spooky light — when they work. There aren't many people wandering NW 3rd Avenue right now.

But there are a few.

Frank Taboada is a uniformed security guard from Top Line Group. For nearly a year Taboada has walked or biked the streets surrounding the zebra-striped Wynwood Building at 2750 NW 3rd Ave., a converted warehouse that serves as home to Goldman Properties, *Miami New Times*, a furniture store, a shoe store, a gallery, and a salon. At night those businesses are usually closed and empty, but Taboada doesn't mind the seclusion. "It's quiet," he says.

Taboada isn't completely alone on this particular night. Photographer Shawn



BT photos by Erik Bojnansky

**Dim light from tall fixtures makes NW 2nd Avenue a scary place to stroll.**

Brooks is working on a lingerie shoot with model Latoi Williams. It's Williams's first visit to Wynwood. "Back there is a little scary and back *there* is a little scary," she says, pointing at pitch-black areas where streetlights aren't working.

If Brooks, a physically imposing man, weren't nearby, Williams says she'd never pose by the darkened street corners. (She isn't sure about posing *with* Brooks present.)

But the Wynwood Building is a different story. It's a 45,000-square-foot beacon thanks to a series of

downward-pointing lights attached to its roof. "This building is well lit," Brooks says. "It gives a feeling of security."

Expanding that sense of security is among the priorities of the recently formed Wynwood Business Improvement District (BID). David Collins, project director for the Wynwood BID, says even the functioning streetlights don't provide enough brightness for an area that hopes to attract more pedestrians at night. That's because Wynwood's

Continued on page 40

# Run, Don't Walk

A recent study confirms what many already knew: Aventura's main intersection is no place for pedestrians

By Erik Bojnansky  
BT Senior Writer

On Thanksgiving Day 2012, Barbara Rubenstein was walking home with groceries when she was struck and killed by a Miami-Dade Transit bus. She was 84 years old. It was the second time in the past three years that a pedestrian had been killed by a bus at the intersection of Aventura Boulevard and NE 29th Place.

Seven months later, transportation consultants Kimley-Horn and Associates presented a 28-page report to the Aventura City Commission suggesting ways the intersection could be made safer. It'll cost \$227,000 to implement the improvements, which will include flashing lights along crosswalks, reconfiguring corners,

and installing new signs.

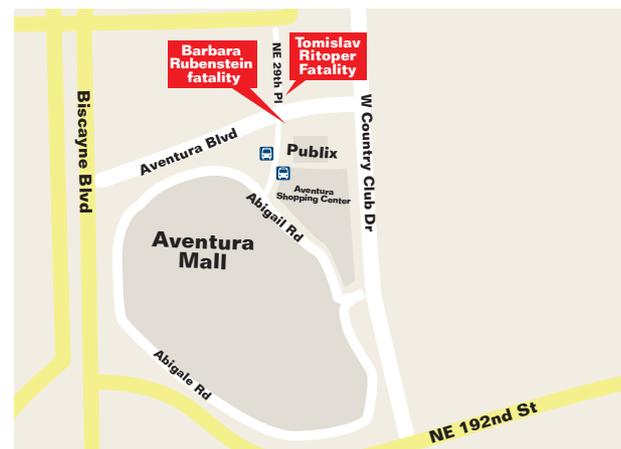
The city won't necessarily have to pick up the entire bill. That's because a stretch of NE 29th Place between Aventura Boulevard and Abigail Road — heavily trafficked by visitors to Aventura Mall, Publix shoppers, and bus commuters — is privately owned by Aventura Mall proprietor Turnberry Associates and Jacksonville-based Regency Centers, owner of the Publix-anchored Aventura Shopping Center.

The projected cost for the "private" portion of right-of-way improvements is \$168,000. That means, in order to implement the proposed changes, Aventura officials will need the cooperation of the two companies. The city also must coordinate with Miami-Dade County, since the county has final say on crosswalks

and street signs.

City manager Eric Soroka says the report was commissioned soon after Rubenstein was struck and killed. Rubenstein died just across the street from where 51-year-old Tomislav Ritoper was killed by another Miami-Dade bus on November 27, 2010. The bus driver who struck Ritoper was later charged with leaving the scene of a fatal accident. The Miami-Dade Police Department did not respond to *BT*'s request for information regarding Rubenstein's accident.

The Kimley-Horn report reveals the intersection of Aventura Boulevard and NE 29th Place experiences plenty of accidents. Between 2008 and 2012, there



Map by Marcy Mock

**Safety improvements to the busy area will require a public-private partnership.**

were 53 accidents there, the majority of them car crashes. Of those accidents, 34 percent were "dark-condition crashes," the report notes. By contrast, dark-condition crashes constituted only 30 percent of accidents statewide.

Injuries were reported in 18 of the 53 accidents. Only seven of the recorded accidents involved pedestrians. However, three of those pedestrians (including

Continued on page 42

# It's Time to Walk the Walk

Imagine 15 miles of public walkway along Biscayne Bay and the Miami River

By Christian Cipriani  
BT Contributor

After decades of wishful thinking and false starts, portions of a waterfront esplanade linking Miami's bayfront neighborhoods are slowly falling into place amid renewed governmental and public support.

Last month the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce hosted a presentation by Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, a founding principal of urban planning firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) and longtime dean of the University of Miami School of Architecture (she recently relinquished that position after 18 years).

At the luncheon she shared highlights from the School of Architecture's 84-page *On the Waterfront* study, which outlines plans for a continuous 15-mile walkway along Biscayne Bay. It would stretch from Alice Wainwright Park, just below the Rickenbacker Causeway, to the north end of Edgewater, with a deep diversion inland along the banks of the Miami River.

Among the most vocal supporters at the luncheon were members of the hospitality industry. It's in their interest, she noted, for tourists to walk out of hotels and interact with the water, rather than just hop in a taxi. Moving with great urgency is a Miami hallmark; a baywalk would bring the lost art of calm wandering not only to visitors but also to locals.

The City of Miami considered ideas from *On the Waterfront* when compiling its own unified baywalk recommendations, which it presented to the public in April. The city's vision, however, involves serious compromises in the name of immediate implementation, like snaking foot traffic away from the water (at times all the way to Biscayne Boulevard) to avoid private property.

With so many critical gaps remaining, one might hardly notice that more than

five miles of publicly accessible waterfront walkways currently exist in the City of Miami. Much of the forward movement is coming through new developments along the Miami River Greenway that will include public walkways, and the Museum Park area, which benefits greatly from being public land. The same cannot be said for challenging, built-up areas like Edgewater, where so many older condos occupy the waterfront.

In spite of everyone's best intentions, a continuous baywalk presents many issues — especially around public-private property ownership. Among the most difficult to solve is how to persuade residents of condominiums built before 1979 to turn their private land into a public thoroughfare. Since that year, waterfront developments in the City of Miami have been obligated to provide a paved and landscaped public walkway within a 50-foot public easement (to the building, not the property line).

The hope is that if these older buildings see neighbors get involved, they'll feel pressure to not be the holdout that breaks the chain. This is what Plater-Zyberk describes as the first step toward significant cultural change: See an example of the goal you want to achieve, remove the barriers, make it happen, and then regulate the process for future replication.

Last month the *BT* also spoke with Spencer Crowley, the Miami-Dade County representative to the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). FIND is an independent special taxing district of the state, and one of its missions is to provide matching grants to local governments for waterfront improvement projects.

Most of these grants are under \$1 million, but because they're based on each municipality's tax revenue, it could theoretically grant Miami-Dade County up to \$6 million per year in matching support. Among FIND's more visible



Floating baywalk in Edgewater: Expensive and maybe impractical, but very nice.



Even nicer: Why not go all the way to Miami Beach?

achievements was funding seawall reconstruction around the Miami Circle after it began eroding into the river. It also subsidized the city's purchase of land along the Little River for Manatee Bend Park.

FIND gave a total of \$5.8 million in grants toward waterfront projects at Parcel B (behind American Airlines Arena), Bicentennial Park, and the FEC Slip, covering the costs of seawall design, permitting, and construction. They're now helping to fund landscaping, lighting, and other improvements to the new baywalk next door at Museum Park.

This is the context in which Crowley discusses some of the baywalk's many financial, legal, and political complications. He sees the city's zigzag plans as a "realistic" solution when considering

older bayfront properties. "It's hard to place such big demands on private property owners," he says.

But Crowley is working with stakeholders to close gaps in the baywalk one by one, starting with the Miami Women's Club. The City of Miami recently applied for a \$150,000 matching grant from FIND to link the Double Tree Grand Hotel to Margaret Pace Park, along the club's waterfront property line.

Crowley actually calls a continuous baywalk in the city's core, from SE 15th Road in Brickell north to Margaret Pace Park, "immediately achievable."

"I think we're close to eliminating the last impediments in a central area, and the opportunity to achieve a connected

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University of Miami

**They've already done it in West Palm Beach: An underpass (left) and floating walkway (right).**

**Baywalk**

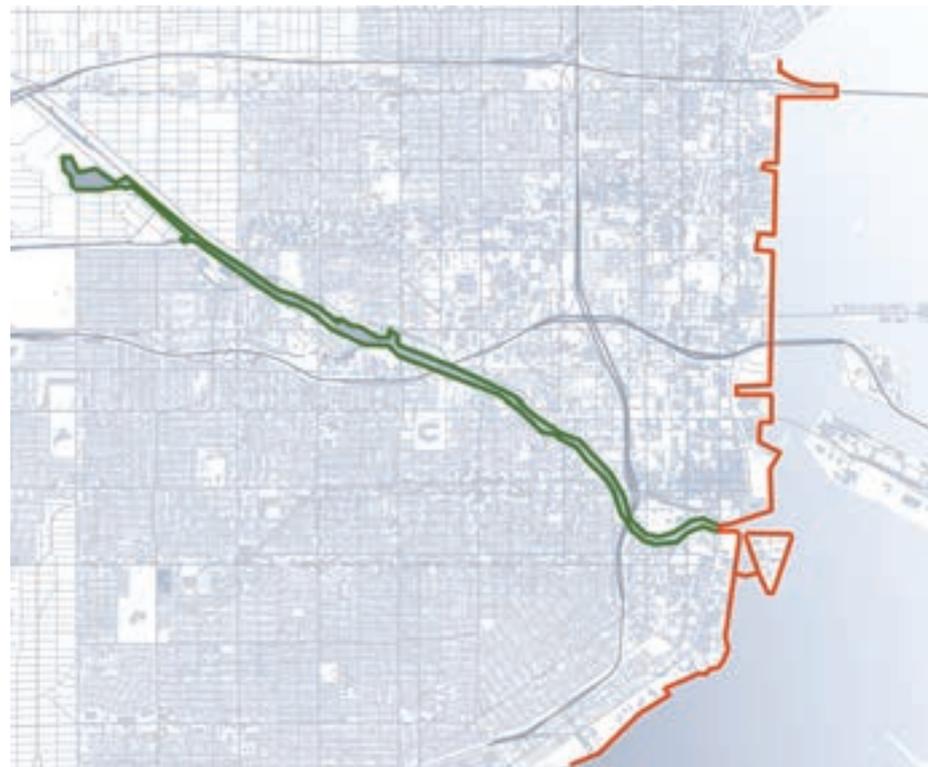
Continued from page 37

baywalk is very real," he says. Echoing Plater-Zyberk's theory about how significant cultural changes come to pass, Crowley points to Museum Park's baywalk as a potential benchmark that others will emulate: "Once Museum Park opens, we're going to have something really great that will help convince people of the possibilities."

At the city's April public input meeting, two options were brought up to deal with old properties that won't adapt anytime soon: A walkway cantilevered out over the bay was dismissed as too expensive, and a floating walkway or "dock" system was labeled environmentally unsound. Floating docks feature prominently in *On the Waterfront*, and regulations in fact only stipulate that a dock must let through 50 percent of sunlight to nourish the sea grass.

The real impediment to building out from the seawall is ownership of the bay bottom. Some private condos already own a portion of the bay in front of them, but as Crowley explained, it's more commonly owned by the State of Florida, and largely protected from local development by the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve Act.

There have been several recent attempts by local municipalities to get



**The complete 15-mile route includes a long loop along the Miami River.**

around the act by lobbying for exemptions. In both 2011 and 2012, the City of Miami Beach went to the state legislature seeking a limited exemption (about ten feet out into the water) so the city could build a baywalk from Lincoln Road to South Pointe Park. However, without vigorous lobbying, there just wasn't the

political will to make it happen.

Similarly, North Bay Village has the chance to create a waterfront node at the end of North Bay Island, around a proposed eight-story condo development, but it would take an exemption to allow anyone to build out into the bay. This is unlikely to happen.

University of Miami

Even without ownership and legislative issues, an over-the-water baywalk would come up against regulatory issues. Despite dock/walkway designs that allow sunlight through, and *On the Waterfront's* plans for planting lots of mangroves — which could arguably create a net positive environmental impact — some worried activists won't tolerate any exemption from the protections of the Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve Act.

Much of *On the Waterfront* also recommends significant new landscaping, with a heavy investment in shade trees. This is a serious quality-of-life issue in Miami. Despite being one of America's most sun-beaten cities, it repeatedly fails to offer shade trees in many public spaces. Priority is instead given to iconic yet useless palm trees (at great expense, too, especially for Royal Palms). Yet it's a misconception that only palms thrive in this climate. To see how dense, shaded, and diverse Miami's plant life can be, talk a walk through Greynolds Park.

The problem, Plater-Zyberk notes, is that not everyone values trees. Some decision-makers see them as messy, high-maintenance, and susceptible to bugs and disease. She also suggests the existence of a more basic gap: "A lot of people here are coming from very paved

Continued on page 43

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**Bright Idea**

Continued from page 36

streetlights are designed to illuminate highways, not sidewalks.

Someday the Wynwood BID will want to consider replacing the giant cobra heads with pedestrian-friendly streetlights between 13 and 15 feet tall, according to Collins. That will take time, money, and the cooperation of the current streetlights' owners: Florida Power and Light and the City of Miami.

But there's a more immediate solution, Collins says: Encourage property owners to install "downlights" on their buildings by offering grants that will cover up to 50 percent of the installation costs. Various other buildings, many of which (like the Wynwood Building) are owned by Goldman Properties, already have downlights. "These sorts of lights, along the sides of buildings, give nighttime illumination," Collins says. "It will be sort of a white light, as opposed to the yellow light" from current streetlights.

A major source of funding for these proposed downlights for Wynwood property owners will likely be... Wynwood property owners.

On June 4, most of the property owners within the Wynwood BID's boundaries agreed to form a zone in which *all* commercial property owners will be charged a special annual assessment of 11 cents for every square foot of vacant land and building space above the second floor. For ground-level office and retail space, property owners will be charged 22 cents per square foot.

On October 1, when the special taxing district begins operating, those assessments will give the Wynwood BID an annual \$700,000-plus budget for enhanced services like security, sanitation, marketing, and lighting.



**Downlights like these will be subsidized by the Wynwood Business Improvement District.**

"The priorities are to make Wynwood a clean, safe, exciting district, and now we actually have the funding to do it," says Joseph Furst, Goldman Properties' managing director, who pushed for the creation of the Wynwood BID.

Milagros Bello, owner of the Curator's Voice Art Project at 299 NW 25th St., says she's in favor of the BID, but doesn't see a need for a special lighting program. Instead, she advises, just make sure the existing streetlights actually work. "On 25th Street, between 2nd and 3rd avenues, it's completely dark," Bello complains. "We already contacted the city almost two months ago and nothing happened. They just have to change the bulbs. It's easy. It's not expensive."

In fact, according to Collins, it isn't always easy. "The problem is that the streetlights are hard to identify," he explains, adding that sometimes the serial numbers are faded, so when an outage is reported, "you have to identify it with a ribbon."

Streetlight outages aren't always caused by burned-out bulbs. Besides

faulty wiring or deteriorating fixtures, there are also vandals who throw rocks at the bulbs, says Juvenal Santana, Jr., chief civil engineer for Miami's public works department. In such cases, a community can request that "vandal shields" be added to the lights.

In addition, the city or FPL must be notified of the outage. "We don't have someone assigned to roam the streets at night," Santana says. "We depend on reporting from the public."

Indeed, following inquiries from the *BT*, FPL sent crews to repair streetlights by NW 20th Street and NW 2nd Avenue, says Marie Bertot, a spokeswoman for FPL. At deadline, it remained unclear if the streetlights along 25th Street, about which Bello complained, had been repaired, although Bertot acknowledges that they, too, are maintained by FPL.

As for the pedestrian-level streetlights advocated by Collins, Santana says there's a catch. Sure, shorter poles will provide more light in the immediate area, but that's it. The shorter the height of a

streetlight, Santana notes, the more streetlights you'll need to illuminate a block.

Gita Shonek, assistant director of membership and development for the Bakehouse Art Complex at 561 NW 32nd St., says the lighting is indeed dim on the art collective's block. However, she'd rather see less crime than more lighting. During an event last year, a few cars parked near the Bakehouse were burglarized. Since then, she says, "for every single event, we need to have security officers patrolling here."

Security guard Taboada says car break-ins were common around the Wynwood Building before he came along. Photographer Brooks says car burglaries still happen — day and night — the farther you get from the Wynwood Building, whether west, beyond NW 5th Avenue, or east, between NW 2nd Avenue and N. Miami Avenue.

"We did a shoot down here [a month ago] with 20 photographers, and four cars were broken into," Brooks recounts. So when working in Wynwood, Brooks parks his car where he can see it. To deter a burglar from smashing windows, Brooks keeps his door unlocked, "so if you want it, just go in there and get it."

Furst of Goldman Properties vows that an increase in security will come along with increased lighting. The assessments, he says, will enable the Wynwood BID to hire more security guards for the area, as well as off-duty Miami police officers.

FPL has a hotline to report streetlight outages: 1-800-468-8243. You can also report online at [www.FPL.com/streetlight](http://www.FPL.com/streetlight).

Streetlight outages within the City of Miami can be reported to the public works department's operations division at 305-416-1200 or 305-960-2870.

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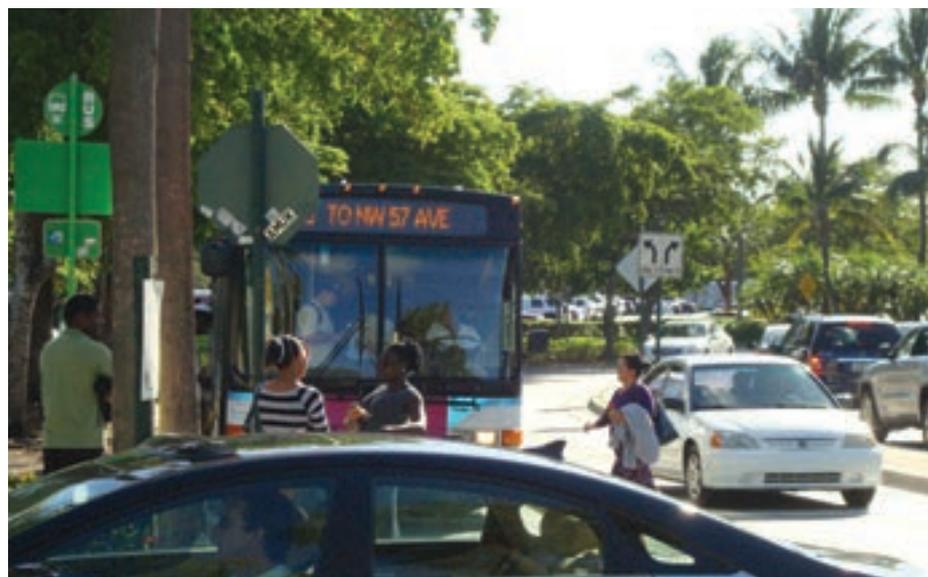
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BT photos by Erik Bojnansky

**Resident Nancy Lee: “My husband and I always think we”re going to get run over.”**

### Run, Don't Walk

Continued from page 36

Rubenstein and Ritoper) died. Four of the seven pedestrian accidents occurred near transit stops.

There are a whopping seven bus stops near the intersection. Two of them are on opposite sides of NE 29th Place, in front of the Publix, and used by commuters heading to and from Miami Beach, downtown Miami, other parts of North Miami-Dade, and even Broward County.

This past December, the *BT* witnessed people dashing across 29th Place's four lanes of traffic in an attempt to catch their bus. There aren't any clearly visible crosswalks on 29th Place by the Publix, and the east side of the street lacks a complete sidewalk. (See “Waiting to Happen,” January 2013.)

Says Soroka: “I don't know if it's the most dangerous [intersection in Aventura], but it's up there, based on the number of pedestrians using the area and all the bus stops located along NE 29th Place.”

The intersection will likely become even busier once a state-of-the-art Miami-Dade Regional Library branch opens across the street from the Publix, noted Mayor Susan Gottlieb during a workshop on June 19. As a result, she said, “it's really important that we get [these improvements] done.”

Among the remedies recommended by Kimley-Horn: Reduce the right-turn radius of the southeast corner of NE 29th Place and Aventura Boulevard adjacent to the Publix. The rounded corner that exists now encourages people to speed while turning, Kimley-Horn consultant

J. Suzanne Danielson told commissioners during the workshop. Commissioner Luz Urbaz Weinberg, a frequent Publix shopper, said she witnesses cars “flying through” that corner every day.

Because NE 29th Place is enshrouded in darkness at night, Kimley-Horn recommended that decorative streetlights be placed along that street between Aventura Boulevard and Abigail Road. The consultants also suggested repainting a crosswalk by Publix's entrance and installing flashing lights on crosswalk signs and in the pavement along the crosswalk to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians.

Additionally, Kimley-Horn recommended placing “No Pedestrian Crossing” and “Use Crosswalk” signs to deter jaywalking, as well as “Yield to Pedestrians” signs to dissuade cars from zipping through crosswalks while people are trying to navigate the street. The traffic consultants also recommend removing the stop sign by the Publix entrance once the enhanced crosswalk is installed.

One change the report didn't endorse is creating a complete sidewalk on the east side of NE 29th Place. “The sidewalk on the east side south of the intersection is discontinuous and terminates in the Publix parking lot,” the report states, but “since the right-of-way is constrained, we are not recommending sidewalk extension.”

Aventura is still in the early stages of contacting the relevant property owners and Miami-Dade County. Turnberry Associates spokesman Matt Levinson says Aventura Mall general manager Oscar Pacheco will meet with Aventura city

Continued on page 43



Photo by Carlos Morales

About five miles of public baywalk already exists, like this in Brickell.

### Baywalk

Continued from page 38

places, where green spaces are not part of their cultural values.”

But cultural shifts are indeed happening around Miami, evidenced by a growing willingness to make significant investments in landmark projects like performing arts centers, sports complexes, and museums. Remember that Manhattan wasn’t designed around Central Park. It was a radical retrofit spearheaded by well-funded visionaries. It will take the same level of vision and financial commitment to bring to life a complete, uncompromising baywalk that Miami can herald as a landmark.

“In the history of American cities, many of our important places of gathering

an identity were produced after-the-fact,” Plater-Zyberk says. “Almost anything you look at is an incremental aggregation of private, often speculative, development.”

The rapid booms and busts of frenetic, private, and extremely speculative development have defined Miami. Now, however, may be the time to fire up the collective will and forge the city around a new mold — a thriving, iconic, 15-mile baywalk. Our own linear, waterfront Central Park.

*On the Waterfront, Jacob Brillhart, principal author, with contributions by Victor Santana and Brett Bibeau, can be downloaded here: [arc.miami.edu/images/uploads/UM\\_OnTheWaterfront.pdf](http://arc.miami.edu/images/uploads/UM_OnTheWaterfront.pdf).*

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### Run, Don’t Walk

Continued from page 42

officials in July. Chad Byrne, Aventura Shopping Center’s property manager, says his company only just received the report, but he will meet with city manager Soroka this month: “The safety of our shoppers and employees is a top priority.”

Miami-Dade officials from transit, police, and public works did not return messages from the *BT* by deadline. Has Miami-Dade Transit been helpful regarding safety concerns at that intersection? “Not at this point, no,” Soroka answers. “We will get them involved in the process as well. [MDT officials] have come forward with possibly redesigning the bus stops, but not changing the locations.”

Aventura resident Nancy Lee says city officials shouldn’t focus their attention solely on the Aventura Boulevard and 29th Place intersection. She insists that roads throughout the “City of

Excellence” are dangerous. “Aventura drivers don’t respect crosswalks,” says Lee, a blogger for the website Eye on Miami. “My husband and I always think we’re going to get run over.”

Soroka counters that Aventura has done a lot to improve pedestrian safety since its incorporation in 1996, “including upgrading and adding sidewalks, adding more bus enclosures, and installing countdown notifications for pedestrians to cross the street at every major intersection in the city.”

What will really improve pedestrian safety in Aventura, Soroka notes, is education. “We need to remind our residents to not cross in the middle of the street and to use the crosswalks that have been provided,” he says. “On the other hand, motorists need to be reminded to yield to pedestrians and to stop when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk.”

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# A Revolting Situation

This Fourth of July, the City of Miami, beset by its own incompetence, should wave the white flag

By Frank Rollason  
BT Contributor

In honor of Independence Day, here are a few topics concerning local government deserving of a few comments:

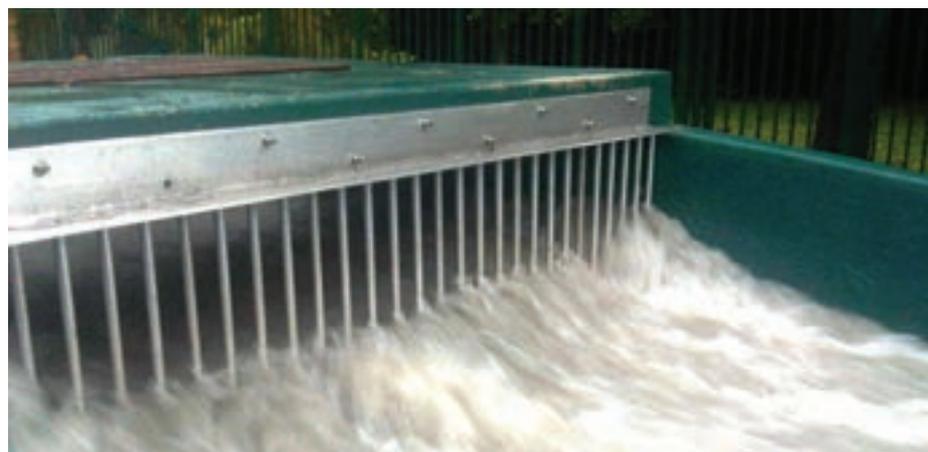
**Redistricting:** Some of you may not be aware that Belle Meade is no longer in Miami Commission District 2. That's right. As a result of the 2010 U.S. Census, and the city's need to comply with the federal requirements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Belle Meade — along with Shorecrest, Bayside, and all of Palm Grove — has been moved into District 5. The dividing line in the Upper Eastside is NE 61st Street.

District 5 has been the predominantly "black" district in the city, containing the

neighborhood of Overtown and portions of Liberty City. The city commission, with the avid support of District 2 Commissioner Marc Sarnoff, split the Upper Eastside, with Morningside, Bay Point, and Magnolia Park remaining in District 2, and the rest of us "moving" to District 5 in order to balance the population.

Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones, who holds the District 5 seat, resisted taking all of the Upper Eastside for fear it would have an adverse impact on the ability of "her people" to elect an African-American candidate, if they chose to do so. (Commissioner Spence-Jones is African American.)

Shorecrest Homeowners Association president Ken Jett developed, on his own,



BT photo by Frank Rollason

**How it's supposed to work: Belle Meade stormwater pump, 2010.**

several alternative plans that met the constitutional tests of keeping District 5 predominantly black, while keeping all of the Upper Eastside together in District 2. City commissioners rejected these plans, even though Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado threatened to veto any plan that did not keep the Upper Eastside united.

In the end, however, the mayor backed off his original position and decided not to invoke the veto based on the belief that a veto could place the city in conflict with federal law, and potentially

make it the target of a lawsuit.

Maybe this will be good for those neighborhoods moving to District 5, and maybe, just maybe, Commissioner Spence-Jones will take an interest in the problems our communities have been facing for quite some time, with little or no relief.

**Loss of HUD Funding:** Here again the city finds itself in a financial mess. This time the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has claimed, through auditing, that the city has not spent federal funds appropriately or in a timely fashion.

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The consequences are a mandatory reimbursement to the federal government of close to \$700,000, and the reduction of our funding allocation in future years.

The city's first response was to blame President Barack Obama, but when that gained no traction, the finger-pointing began between our elected officials and the Obama administration, with the administration accusing Miami city commissioners of hoarding dollars, and the commissioners blaming the administration for inept management.

However, in classic Miami fashion, no one has stepped forward to take responsibility. The sad part is that our city is still one of the poorest in the nation, and the ultimate losers are the very people who are in most desperate need of the services and projects funded by these dollars.

Perhaps we should reduce the salaries of the politicians and administrators responsible for this mess by the same amount HUD reduces our annual funding. Seems fair to me.

#### Homeless in Downtown Miami:

This latest brouhaha is over the proposal by Commissioner Sarnoff and

the Downtown Development Authority, chaired by Sarnoff, to petition a federal judge to loosen the provisions of the Pottinger Agreement. (Pottinger was a settlement agreement resulting from a lawsuit filed years ago by the American Civil Liberties Union over how the homeless were treated by Miami city officials.)

On the opposing side, we have that well-known lobbyist Ron Book, chairman of the Homeless Trust, who was quoted in the *Miami Herald* as saying, "That won't happen while I'm chairman — they'll have to cart me out."

Nonetheless, the failings of the Homeless Trust, charged with eliminating homelessness in Miami-Dade County, have once again come to the fore. The basic issue is what to do with the chronically homeless, a topic on which I have written several columns.

The bottom line, in my nonprofessional opinion, is that the chronically homeless require a treatment modality different from those who are homeless owing to economic reasons, such as losing a job or losing a home. The chronically homeless, who are most often mentally ill, substance abusers, or both, require special programs designed to address

their issues. It's like this: You wouldn't go to a proctologist for a liver condition.

What would be heartening would be to see the city and the Homeless Trust work together to come up with meaningful solutions instead of squaring off like two kids in a sandlot. The businesses downtown deserve a solution to the problem, and so do the homeless.

Perhaps one solution would be for the city commission to hire Ron Book as a lobbyist to represent the city before the Homeless Trust. Might be worth a shot. After all, the city already has him on its approved-lobbyist list.

**Belle Meade Stormwater Pump Station:** This is yet another example of a relatively straightforward capital project that has run amok. It was supposed to have been an 18-month, \$14 million construction project starting back in late 2005. We are now in the eighth year and it's still not finished.

On June 7, we in Belle Meade, along with many others in the northeast corner of the county, experienced a torrential downpour resulting in about 18 inches of water in some areas. We had severe flooding along NE 77th Street and NE

77th Terrace, much like we had *before* the stormwater project was begun.

Bottom line here is that the second high-volume pump is inoperative, and has been for at least the past two years. The city has been aware of this issue, along with others that need to be corrected, yet is incapable of resolving them.

I dare say if this pump station were located in Coconut Grove, the problems would have been fixed a long time ago.

**Solid Waste Service:** Through it all, though, our garbage and trash is picked up efficiently every week. Thanks to Department of Solid Waste director Keith Carswell and supervisor Marvin Antill, our streets are also swept every other week (and more often than that when the sweeper is available).

This service cuts down on the debris entering the stormwater system and allows the pumps to operate more effectively.

Perhaps a solution to other ongoing issues in the city would be to place Mr. Carswell in charge, since he is apparently quite adept at cleaning up messes on a regular basis.

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# The Two Faces of Aventura

Consumed with saving our money and our looks, we revere banks and cosmetic surgery

By **Jay Beskin**  
BT Contributor

**W**ho puts money in a bank anymore? When we were kids, back in the Dark Ages, also known as the 20th Century, they taught us that your money could make its own money without your help, if only you'd hand it over to the pretty lady with the little nameplate reading, "Teller."

The path to prosperity seemed simple enough. First you manufactured some widgets, then you sold them at a profit, and finally you inserted the proceeds into the great banking machinery that

doubled as the economic engine of this great country.

Our teachers handed out little pass-books, and we pooled our pennies into savings accounts that paid five-and-one-half percent interest per annum. At that rate, our teacher with the rosy cheeks assured us, our money would double every 13 years, owing to a mysterious calculation known as compound interest.

Then one day some banker playing with numbers discovered that, even after the passing of P.T. Barnum, suckers continued to be born at the rate of one a minute. The bankers wised up and decided interest was no longer interesting and principal should be the operating



principle: "We will hold your money and make money with it and, in return, we will give you...*your money back!*"

After people bought into that concept, the banks ratcheted things up another notch. They instituted charges for every service and huge penalties for every infraction. If you bounced a \$10 check, the bank might pay it, charging you \$35 (or

350-percent interest) for "loaning" you the money, or it might not pay the check and still charge you \$35 for *not* lending you the money.

Needless to say, at this point in history, any reasonable fiscal model would recommend the mattress method over the bank.

So what does it say about Aventura that it has 17 bank branches in its 3.2

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square miles and, in case those weren't enough, is witnessing the prominent construction of yet another Chase on Biscayne Boulevard? Are we so naive that we don't notice how much we are paying for so little in return?

Or are we just so rich that we don't need to bother with investing well?

Which brings us to our other local field of specialization. Although we do not have a movie industry like Hollywood (the one in California) or a theater scene like Broadway in New York, we do have plenty of what accompanies those endeavors: plastic surgery.

Those same 3.2 square miles we know and love so much are home to 22 cosmetic surgeons, by my unofficial count. Up and down our streets and storefronts and office complexes, the scalpels are busily carving the unattractive excess off our frames, searching desperately to unearth the world-class beauty lurking somewhere beneath the surface.

Perhaps because of intense close-range competition, their advertising is ubiquitous. Everywhere we turn, we are beset by billboards juxtaposing the wearing sag of Mother Nature against

the perking pep of Doctor Lookgood. If you cannot face your face, but are afraid of spending too much money, they can give you a nose for a bargain. If you are looking to trim your gluteus, you have a glut of choices. If you ask for liposuction, they will not give you any lip.

Not that there's anything wrong with that, as Jerry Seinfeld famously said. If you feel that your craggy features are misrepresenting the buoyant, youthful spirit behind that face, you should have every right to project your true inner self. If it takes a scalpel to offer the world a view of the real you, it seems a small price to pay.

Science has been advancing steadily while we have been toiling at our careers, or so I am told. True, Sharon Stone filed a lawsuit and won a settlement against a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon who falsely claimed that he had given her a facelift, but for lesser mortals there is no shame in accepting our imperfection — and then clipping it right off.

What makes me wonder is this: How did Aventura manage to become Mecca for Mack the Knife? Are our own friends and neighbors all slicing and dicing to put

a better face on their lives? Or are these patients from around the state, the country, and the world, drawn inexorably to this island of smooth operators who can smooth out all of life's little wrinkles?

Putting these two faces of Aventura side by side makes them appear difficult to reconcile.

Taking hard-earned money and depositing it to languish in stodgy banks strikes me as a practice for people who are slow to change their ways, clinging to old patterns of behavior long after they have ceased to be either relevant or beneficial.

By contrast, writing a big check to a medical practice for elective surgery to improve one's physical form and appearance comes across as a risk-taking, revolutionary act.

Perhaps, then, there are two Aventuras. Half of us are showcasing our original faces, or what remains of them. We are stuck working well beyond our natural retirement age because our money is "in the bank," where guys with MBAs build fortunes from it without including us in the dividend.

Big signs in our lovely branch office tell us we are earning 0.25 percent, but only with a minimum balance of \$100,000

— or something like that. We are firmly convinced that nothing has changed since we began our passbook account on Bank Day in third grade in the 1950s.

The other half are savvy investors whose money is working overtime in high-powered hedge funds. The only bank account we have maintains a \$5 balance to stay open, and then only so our tax refund can be direct deposited there once a year. With all our extra cash, we are jet-setting around to exotic destinations.

And with all that energetic bustle in our lives, our old face simply will not do anymore. To help keep our chemistry fresh, we make periodic visits to the operating table.

Or is there really just one Aventura with a split personality? Maybe the answer lies in the advertising slogan of one local human chop shop, promising through Botox and rhinoplasty and what not to "reverse the aging process."

Could it be that this effort to reclaim our lost youth has inadvertently brought us back to the third grade? Not that there is anything wrong with that.

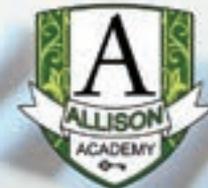
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# The Drive to Evolve

The large number of parking lots downtown, and our dependence on them, is holding back our development

By **Adam Schachner**  
BT Contributor

Nothing illuminates traffic hell like Biscayne Boulevard during an event at the American Airlines Arena — especially a Miami Heat game.

Metromover stations are within cursing distance of the arena, but drivers overlook free transit for the comfort of their cars, perhaps believing that driving is more convenient, even while shelling out upwards of \$20 for gas and parking. For major events at the arena, they may spend \$50, only to expend absurd amounts of time and energy, and to endure even more congestion.

We have a peculiar situation along Biscayne Boulevard near the arena. For several hours a week, this property is the

most desirable real estate for a majority of Miami's independent "investors" — the game-going public. Fierce competition erupts during arena events as drivers scramble to stake temporary claims on downtown real estate.

Yet these parking lots are occupied for fewer hours each week than most people work in a day.

According to the Miami Downtown Development Authority, as of 2011 downtown (from Brickell to Edgewater) hosted a resident population of 71,600, and a daytime workforce of more than 200,000. Between public-transit commuters, workplace garages, and residential parking, downtown's population would seem to have adequate parking accommodations. At least, that's what the predominantly empty lots along Biscayne Boulevard suggest.



BT photo by Adam Schachner

The nighttime clamor to use these spaces is clearly profitable for the lot owners. While these properties come with associated expenses, the fact that they contain no buildings or other facilities limits costs for maintaining what are essentially unoccupied asphalt slabs. Then game night arrives and they are instant income. Miami's driving culture only reinforces the notion that the lots are more valuable undeveloped than developed.

The Miami-Dade County Appraiser's Website provides surprising information

on the values associated with downtown's empty lots. The numbers inspire serious contemplation: A majority of the parking lots near the Freedom Tower (and the arena) have changed hands in the past few years for sums in excess of \$20-\$30 million.

Development has returned to the area in a big way, and some of the deliberately underdeveloped spaces around the arena are commanding prices comparable to properties in Brickell. Meanwhile, the Brickell boom has created a "major parking problem," as a *Daily Business Review*

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article stated in June, which also indicated that the area's "pronounced recovery is hindered by the absence of public parking."

Jaime Correa, an architect who has worked around the world and the Knight Professor for Community Building in the University of Miami's Suburb and Town Design program, says this: "The problem with parking is not parking itself. The problem is deeper than that. The real problem is that our contemporary cities have been designed in increments that contain one use and one use only. We put all our government buildings in one place; our high-density residential buildings in another; our midsize buildings in another. Our schools are located in the middle of nowhere. Our recreational areas are left-over spaces. We lack legible public space."

In a column for the *BT* this past December ("The Power of Thinking Small"), former Brickell/Downtown correspondent Craig Chester observed that "presently, popular destinations like the Arsht Center and American Airlines Arena sit on islands lacking any integration with their surroundings," and wondered whether event-goers were likely to visit other downtown attractions. His

conclusion: "The answer is probably not, if the walking conditions are as uninviting as they currently are."

An eyesore and deterrent to foot traffic, these vacant lots surely have better uses while they remain undeveloped. Miami is enjoying a surge in farmers markets, food trucks, art festivals, and outdoor events requiring accessible terrain. Yet downtown has not effectively claimed such opportunities — with one notable exception: Grand Central Park.

The brainchild of downtown property owner Brad Knoefler, the park (named after Knoefler's nearby nightclub) sits on the site of the former Miami Arena. The five-acre park has become a popular public space — on private property, but built mainly with public money. However, Grand Central's days are numbered. Late last year it was purchased by developers who see potential for a different kind of green on that spot.

Picture a downtown where open spaces aren't used solely for car storage on game nights. These parking lots should be a coveted commodity during the day and on the arena's off nights.

Consider the possibilities for sports tournaments and league events should

more vacant land be repurposed. One example: Miami has its own women's roller derby squad, the Vice City Rollers, but they are forced to compete on a roller rink at the Palmetto Golf Course in far south Miami-Dade.

The last few minutes of a Heat game — especially one that's already been decided on the scoreboard — speak volumes on the issue. Spectators in court-side seats disappear during the fourth quarter. These fans have most likely spent half my year's rent on their tickets, but abandon the full return on their investment to beat the rush to the parking lots. They've escaped to their cars, road warriors paying a semester's worth of tuition in parking, gasoline, and tickets for games they do not watch all the way to the end — because of traffic.

Alternatively, spectators commuting by public transit maximize their ticket purchases. While access to fixed-rail transportation is embarrassingly bad throughout Miami, an irony of our deplorable transit structure is that the limits of train travel do not apply to Heat games.

The American Airlines Arena is among the few attractions that can easily be

reached by public transit, one leg of which is free of charge. Parking at Metrorail stations costs \$4, and each trip is \$2. Rail commuters pay remarkably less to get to games than those who park, and they don't have to leave early to beat the traffic.

Miami's civic leaders should listen to Correa's formulation of a viable cityscape without dependence on parking, especially given the options we have for alternative transportation. His vision resonates: "Less parking is not a sign of lack. Less parking is a sign of intellectual and real development. Less parking is not a curse; it is a blessing."

Downtown attractions interspersed among parking lots, such as the future Perez Art Museum Miami and the Museum of Science, are gathering places and beautification efforts. Still, these islands of urban progress are being created amid a sprawl of asphalt and emptiness.

From preseason to last month's NBA championship, the Heat played a total of 59 games at home. That leaves 306 days and nights when most of those parking lots could be used for something other than cars. Ideas? Send them to us.

*Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com*

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# A City Divided

Now that a majority of the North Miami City Council has turned over, will anything else change?

By Mark Sell  
BT Contributor

If there was any doubt before, the June 4 runoff election proved that North Miami politics has jumped the shark. The city is profoundly and antagonistically divided, east versus west, white versus black. And the mayoral contest has all but cemented a Haitian-American majority on the council for a long time to come.

With a record 7293 votes cast in the mayoral contest, Lucie Tondreau trounced a former mayor, Kevin Burns, by a margin of roughly 56-44 percent, receiving more than 4062 votes. Yet the turnout was so great that Burns, with more than 3200 votes, actually did better than ex-Mayor Andre Pierre when he won in 2011.

Heavy turnout on the east side could not stop the "I Love Lucie" train, which turned into a two-and-a-half hour

celebration/coronation/swearing-in June 11 at North Miami Senior High School. Even if one were to presume the usual voter fraud, absentee-ballot chicanery, and paying people to vote, it's still quite likely, perhaps certain, that Tondreau would have won.

Within a week of the celebration, Burns, represented by powerhouse attorney Joseph Klock, filed a lawsuit to remove Tondreau, challenging the validity of her residency in the Sunkist Grove neighborhood. While Tondreau's victory in the election is, at this writing, at the court's mercy, her status does not change the underlying dynamic at work.

Councilwoman Carol Keys was sworn in from District 2, replacing Michael Blynn; and Councilman Philippe Bien-Aime was sworn in from District 3, replacing Jean Marcellus. Both Keys and, particularly, Bien-Aime signaled in their acceptance speeches independence and



BT photo by Mark Sell

The winners: District 2 Councilwoman Carol Keys, District 3 Councilman Philippe Bien-Aime, Mayor Lucie Tondreau.

freedom from any party line, lobbyists, or special interests, which could make council votes tough to handicap.

There is a good chance both will join Councilman Scott Galvin in asking sharp questions about how the city spends its money, and that Bien-Aime, trained as an accountant, could prove a powerful council member and swing vote.

Pierre, never one to go quietly, turned the swearing-in into a Lucie Tondreau

pep rally, at which perhaps 1500 people, overwhelmingly Haitian American, packed into the school auditorium. Musical groups and Caribbean-American media were in full attendance.

In essence, Pierre sang "My Way" for roughly two hours, talking about all the things he did right over the past four years, and leading call-and-response cheers of "I love Lucie! I adore Lucie! We love Lucie!" Pierre's wife, Bernadette,



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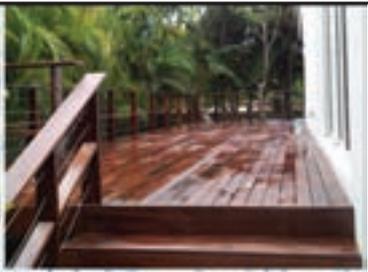
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gave Tondreau a rousing introduction, citing her long history as an organizer and activist in the Haitian community.

Pastor Gregory Toussaint of the Tabernacle of Glory sealed any doubt of the sea change in his pointed final benediction, in English and Kreyol, before the new city council's first routine meeting. He compared the plight of the Haitians to that of the Jews in the Babylonian captivity:

"When they got there, the Lord said, in the Book of Jeremiah, get married, marry your children, build houses, plant vineyards. In other words, God was telling them to organize themselves.

"So let's continue to organize ourselves; let's continue to work together. The United States of America does not encourage division, but it sure encourages representation. And the best people to represent you are those who have come from your womb. And we have seen proof of that tonight. Let's continue to work in that tradition. It will be great for our children, and great for our children's children."

Early in the proceedings, former Mayor Frank Wolland, a longtime friend of Tondreau's who supported her campaign and is widely mentioned as the

next city attorney, walked onto the stage, waved at the audience, and then repaired to the side, beaming like a backstage father throughout the event.

At one point, Pierre awarded the key to the city to a man who has done much to keep Pierre and others out of jail amid various investigations: ace white-collar criminal-defense lawyer Benedict Kuehne, who has known Pierre since his law school days at the University of Miami, where Kuehne was an adjunct professor.

From the stage, there was much talk of healing divisions and unifying the city. One particularly passionate speaker on the subject was Mayor's Task Force co-chair Rabbi Jory Lang of Temple Beth Moshe.

While there is little question that healing is sorely needed, the fight is not about to stop. Precinct analysis confirms sharp division.

The 25.74 percent voter turnout marked a historic high. Burns overwhelmingly took the three precincts east of Biscayne Boulevard — which boasted the city's highest turnout — by 95 percent, 94 percent, and 84 percent. Nearly half of all voters cast ballots in Precinct 147, representing southern Keystone Point.

Yet this strong, even overwhelming, turnout from an area representing roughly 30 percent of North Miami's population and 70 percent of its tax base could not stem the Tondreau tide.

While Burns performed strongly in the areas east of W. Highway, around downtown and Johnson and Wales University, Tondreau easily trumped him everywhere else, often by a 75-25 or even an 80-20 margin. In Precinct 138, west of NE 6th Avenue, she got 90 percent of the vote. Haitian radio certainly helped, and she thanked radio hosts in her acceptance.

For all the poetry and ecstasy of the swearing-in, actual governance will quickly turn prosaic: raising money for services, spending it wisely, and accounting for it clearly.

Sidewalks, streetlights, and pavement in many parts of the city are nonexistent or crumbling, many households are sorely pressed — with unemployment at 10.3 percent as of this past March — and many city-run side streets are prone to severe flooding, as June's 15-inch downpour proved.

Under Pierre's watch, the crime rate dropped, water bills stayed low, and Michael Swerdlow and the Biscayne

Landing developers gave the city \$20 million, pushing the budget into a surplus.

At the same time, the city has acquired a reputation for corruption and cronyism, not helped by Pierre's high-handed manner from the dais, opaque dealings in the background, multiple investigations, and no-bid contracts passed at midnight, with little notice at city council meetings.

If it is vital to get beyond demagoguery and rhetoric, here are two modest suggestions: 1) Before the September budget hearings, conduct an independent forensic audit of the city's finances, so everyone knows how much money there is and for what purposes it is allocated; 2) institute a uniform, independent standard for requests for qualifications and requests for proposals for all city contracts.

The City of Miramar, which recently completed a waste-disposal contract with a rigorous process that survived a court challenge, could provide a good example.

If sunshine is the best disinfectant, let the cleansing and healing begin.

*Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com*

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# A Summer of Regrets

A house that's falling down, no mangoes on the trees, and a favorite haunt gone into the bay — and it's only July

By **Jen Karetnick**  
BT Contributor

Summer in the Shores. I wait all year for it. And not just because I'm a full-time educator, full-time writer, and full-time mom who is overcommitted the rest of the time.

Sure, these are my "days off," when I only have one job, with the school kids out and my own kids in camp, at work, or at sports activities. But this is also when I get stuff done in this dozy little village of ours. This is when I become an errands machine.

In fact, much as I despise doing errands, summer is when I truly appreciate the sleepy charm of the Shores. No one

is on the roads, so it's a quick trip to take vintage finds to be altered and repaired at Miami Shores Cleaners, which has a tailor on premises, before hopping across U.S. 1 to actually shop for food to cook, instead of picking up a half-gallon of milk and a can of soup at CVS on the way home.

And of course, I only have to walk out to my yard for mangoes I hand off to neighbors like Kris Wessel, Doug Rodriguez, Andrea Curto-Randazzo, and Dewey LoSasso, all well-known chefs I otherwise rarely get to see.

In truth, my plan in summer usually is to leave the village only to nosh on wings and sip wine with friends that I've unintentionally blown off during the school year. In the same way many



BT photo by Jen Karetnick

Not this year: Bountiful harvest from 2011.

people consider spring a time of renewal, or New Year's a time to reassess, I use summer in the Shores as a reason to gut-check everything about my home, my family, and myself. And I stay as near as possible to the house, as decrepit as it's becoming, to do it.

Indeed, the house needs work. For one: my closet. The main problem is that all the racks fell off the wall sometime during the winter. It's chaos in there. My clothes are

hanging in my office. I'm currently typing through a veil of shirtsleeves.

Then there's the floor, ruined by the dogs; the walls, eaten by termites; and the ceiling, with a leak in the breakfast room that no one can seem to fix. But the flip side is a double-whammy: hammers pounding and dogs barking. I already have the latter. Do I really want the former?

My body also needs a bit of improvement. Ideally, that would be an eye job,

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but I'm too afraid to do anything drastic. After some nasty complications that accompanied kidney surgery last fall, I'd rather not go under the knife. I'd much rather go under the sun, and get even more wrinkles and age spots. At least I'll be relaxed. And hey, I'm covered. I've prepaid for laser abrasion facials to even out my skin and refresh my face.

This summer, however, has been shaping up differently than I imagined, and not only because I'd rather be writing poetry than overseeing the installation of floorboards. This year, forces have been conspiring against me, and everyone else in the Shores who loves mangoes, wings, and faux-surgical interventions.

For one thing, there aren't many mangoes. A super-early, triple-blooming season had the Hadens come down mostly in April. The midseason mangoes look to be yielding a very small crop. The late-season mangoes — those huge, green Indian footballs — aren't coming in at all.

I can't say that I mind not spending hours each day in the yard, but I was looking forward to doing the final photo

shoots for my cookbook this summer. Suffice to say, it's hard to take pictures of chefs grabbing mangoes from the trees when there's very little fruit to pick.

For another, the place that I rely on to catch up with girlfriends and grab some grilled wings and televised sports has fallen into the bay. Like many folks from Miami Shores, I hung out at Shuckers frequently, and was completely shocked when, on a very busy night at

**Summer just isn't the same without the plastic chairs at Shuckers sticking to the backs of my thighs.**

the restaurant, the dock collapsed and fell into the water. I'm thankful no one died, and grateful that my friends — Tab, who practically lives there, and Michaela, who was supposed to be watching the Heat game there that night — were out of the country and had gotten held up at work, respectively.

But, oh, Shuckers, how I loved you. The summer isn't the same without your plastic chairs sticking to the backs of my

thighs and bits of charred wings caught between my teeth.

Then there's my med-spa, Pure, which, after changing my last appointment three times, shut down completely. I'll miss the polite staff and the spa's proximity to my house. Another facility, 911 Urgent Care and Laser, is taking Pure customers on good faith, supplying the treatments that have been paid for in hopes of securing the clients as regulars.

Strategic move for this Hollywood-based med-spa, except for the fact that the receptionists and assistants have been yelled at by irked Pure patrons so many times that I suspect they're beginning to regret their decision.

I've actually spent more time worrying about my cat's body than my own. An elderly Turkish Angora, she suffered what seems like two strokes. The second one left her so off-balance, weak, and disoriented that she hung like a wet mop from my hands. Even so, I didn't have to go far from the Shores for her treatment; veterinarian Dr. Yao's office is just a few blocks south of 79th Street.

Not that there was much he or anyone could do. "Good nursing care" is what he prescribed, so I've been doing feline physical therapy and breaking every two hours from writing to plop my kitty in the litter box. What Dr. Yao's office could offer me, I didn't take: an adorable black, longhaired kitten the staff has up for adoption. Divorcing my husband isn't in my plans for the summer.

The real reason this summer isn't the peaceful oasis I wanted it to be is I've wound up doing some teaching, after all: My daughter received her driver's permit. Now it's no longer a simple matter of picking up one kid and dropping off another. It's scoping out empty parking lots and stopping on every out-of-the-way, little-trafficked street so she can practice. And the Shores has a *lot* of those streets.

So I'm already looking ahead — to next summer. The house might still be crumbling, but my daughter will be driving without me in the passenger seat. She doesn't know it yet, but she's taking over the pickup-and-delivery service. And she can also give me a ride home from that eye job.

Feedback: [letters@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:letters@biscaynetimes.com)

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# No Mere Knockoff

Despite its name, artist-run space Guccivuitton is offering a uniquely original vision of Miami

By Anne Tschida  
BT Arts Editor

Add one more significant entry to the list of local artist-run art spaces. Granted, this is still a very small community — we could use many more — but Guccivuitton, located on NE 2nd Avenue just south of El Portal, is helping make Miami a more exciting art center, something that is clear from its first two exhibits.

Right off the bat, the initial question should be the name. It's a take on a number of Miami-centric elements that inspired artists Lorie Beltran, Domingo Castillo, and Aramis Gutierrez to open the gallery.

Miami is a hybrid city, one that loves bling and imitation, suggests Gutierrez. For example, “in our area of Little Haiti, there is a refugee nature, a scavenger nature, where there are all these imitation products,” like fake Gucci bags out for sale, he says. And then there is the *real* Louis Vuitton, the glamorous brand — oh, so Miami — that is moving into the Design District, just as artists are moving out.

But, he adds, “that’s the nature of our city, and a natural process.” The result is a “hybridization of culture” that makes Miami such a vibrant place, one Gutierrez says is not always expressed in the art we see around town.

The trio decided to open its own gallery to reflect the “colloquial aesthetics” of such a diverse, hybrid place. The artists themselves, while friends, highlight another type of diversity: Gutierrez is known for his huge, nar-



Examples of the Highwaymen paintings: They sold their works from the trunks of their cars.

rative, painted canvases, while Beltran has mostly exhibited sculpture, and Castillo makes more ephemeral, performance-based works.

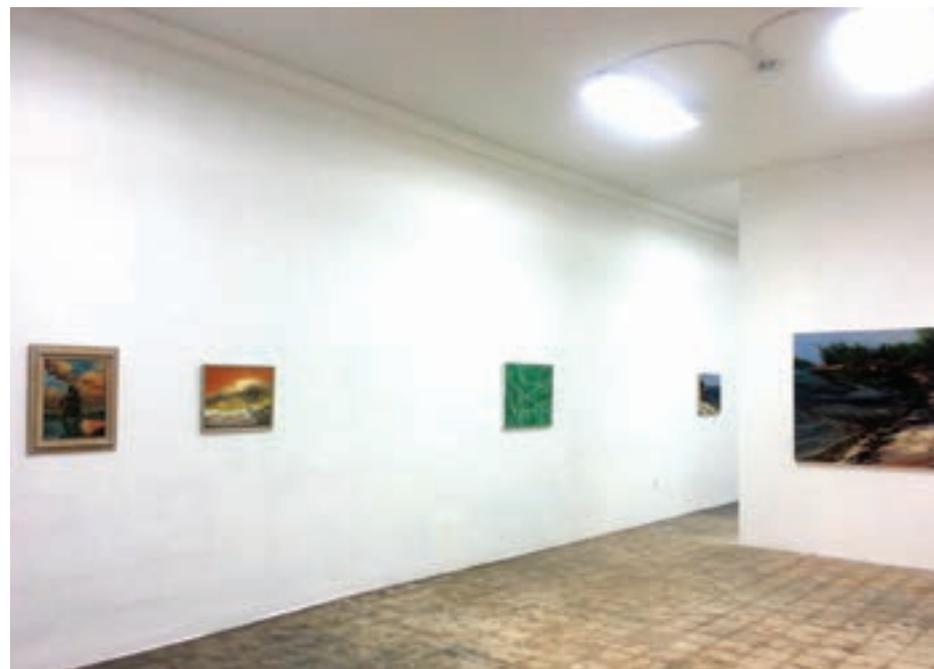
They picked out the storefront space in northern Little Haiti, and in April unveiled an exhibit that succinctly mirrored their mission. It was a solo show from a

laborated with the hacker group Anonymous2 to take down the Websites of such art world bigwigs as the Gagosian Gallery and David Zwirner Gallery. The

collaborative called ART404 (whose art truly is on the outer edge), dealing with imitation and branding.

For the show, ART404 launched a T-shirt line that “is a concept fashion and lifestyle brand based on blatant copyright infringement, identity theft, and love of consumer culture.” One of the shirts they featured was a blend of “Hello Kitty/Murakami/Britto/Disney/Paul Frank Tote Bag.” Pretty funny and cutting stuff.

Following in that vein, the group re-enacted a work, on a computer, in which they col-



The “Florida Landscape Paintings” show at Guccivuitton.

Photos courtesy of Guccivuitton







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piece was titled *Anonymous vs. Gagosian*.

While not Miami-based artists, the duo that comprises ART404 “both lived in Miami [and] gleaned from Miami the scavenger mentality — how to rebrand things and make them their own,” explains Gutierrez.

For the second exhibit, which opened in late June, the tone was very different. It stayed true to what Guccivuitton wants to highlight, although that thread

could initially be hard to follow. Titled “Florida Landscape Paintings,” the show featured figurative paintings from contemporary artists and also a sampling from the group of artists known as the Florida Highwaymen.

The latter were African American, self-taught artists — sometimes called “outsider” artists — who painted Florida landscapes during the segregated decades of the mid-20th Century. They became famous for selling their brightly colored canvases out of the backs of their cars, along the roadsides of rural Florida (hence the name Highwaymen).

According to Gutierrez, this outsider perspective, even from locals, is part of what makes Florida art unique, and why Guccivuitton conceived of this exhibit. The Florida landscape has been idealized, romanticized, and even demonized in painting since the days of European settlement. There have been depictions of



**Scott Armetta's take on the landscape of Florida.**

the peninsula as a flat, swampy wasteland, worthy only of draining.

As most of us know, it is, in fact, a far more complex combination of these things — magnificent beauty and darker, murkier scenarios. Unlike the dramatic vistas of the Rocky Mountains, says Gutierrez, he likes that the Florida landscape has a subversive quality, like the art he wants to expose: “It’s harsh, really, filled with bugs and heat and swamps.”

In the show, the Highwaymen works appear to be channeling the tropical paradise that others believed Florida to be. There are vibrant recreations

**The inspiration for Guccivuitton is the idea of Miami as a place where people reinvent themselves.**

of flaming-orange trees, those royal poincianas; swirling clouds above whitecapped waves and swaying palms;



**Rebranded T-shirts by ART404 at the inaugural exhibit.**

a quiet swamp with wading egrets. They can seem both simple and invigorating, like the painting from Mary Ann Carroll. Considered the only woman among the Highwaymen, she supported herself and seven children by selling works like these, often for as little as \$25.

But the contemporary works from the likes of Daniel Newman, Juan Carballo, and Jason Hedges are equally compelling. The two paintings from Scott Armetta, for instance, are outstanding. Both are recognizable as landscapes, but with a twist — subtle and lovely, but edgy as well. One piece is a sparse, smoke-filled view of burnt trees; the other, a very small, dense, fiery landscape surrounded by a heavy

black frame. Armetta is a good example of how contemporary painters can work within a classic form that may seem outdated, yet make it beautifully relevant.

Some works in the exhibit play with the notion of Florida as a romanticized playground, while still others offer more abstract visions of the ground around us.

These individual expressions of the Florida we live in are what Gutierrez says Guccivuitton aims to promote. It goes back to the idea of Miami as a refugee state, where immigrants from all over soak up the unique, transient nature of the place, where people reinvent themselves.

In contrast to art centers like New York and Los Angeles, with their myriad galleries and art schools, “people here don’t have to look over their shoulder,” says Gutierrez, “to see what others are doing. I think there’s more room for individual expression You can work on yourself.” These are the “potent and valuable voices” the gallery would like to showcase.

On the opening night of “Florida Landscape Paintings,” who knows what was heard? The gallery was packed to the gills. But the art crowd was also milling about the street, interacting with the lively scene on NE 2nd Avenue. It was uniquely Miami — and a reminder that Guccivuitton is not all about imitation.

*“Florida Landscape Paintings” runs through July 27 at Guccivuitton, 8375 NE 2nd Ave. Go to [guccivuitton.net](http://guccivuitton.net) or e-mail [office@guccivuitton.net](mailto:office@guccivuitton.net) for an appointment.*

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Contreras, Alex Yanes, José Mertz, and Karen Vermeer

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2930 NW 7th Ave., Miami  
 305-303-6254, [www.buttergallery.com](http://www.buttergallery.com)  
 Through July 31:  
 "Recent Work" by Douglas Hoekzema (HOX)

**BUZZART**

2750 NW 3rd Ave., Suite 6, Miami  
 305-571-8100, [www.buzz-art.net](http://www.buzz-art.net)  
 Call gallery for exhibition information

**C-ART GALLERY**

2600 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
<http://www.c-artgallery.com>  
 Call gallery for exhibition information

**CARIDI GALLERY**

785 NE 125th St., North Miami  
 786-202-5554  
[www.caridigallery.com](http://www.caridigallery.com)  
 Call gallery for exhibition information

**CAROL JAZZART CONTEMPORARY ART**

158 NW 91st St., Miami Shores  
 305-490-6906, [www.cjazzart.com](http://www.cjazzart.com)  
 By appointment: [carol@cjazzart.com](mailto:carol@cjazzart.com)  
 Call gallery for exhibition information

**CURATOR'S VOICE ART PROJECTS**

299 NW 25th St., Miami  
 305-502-5624, [www.curatorsvoice.com](http://www.curatorsvoice.com)

Call gallery for exhibition information

**DAVID CASTILLO GALLERY**

2234 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
 305-573-8110  
[www.davidcastillogallery.com](http://www.davidcastillogallery.com)  
 Through July 6: "Kaleidoscopic" by Shinique Smith  
 July 13 through August 17:  
 "Lost Boys" by Doan Arslano and Johnny Laderer  
**Reception July 13, 7 to 11 p.m.**

**DIANA LOWENSTEIN FINE ARTS**

2043 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
 305-576-1804  
[www.dfinearts.com](http://www.dfinearts.com)  
 Through July 31:  
 "Season Review" with Cecilia Paredes, Loris Cecchini, Felice Grodin, Fabiano Parisi, Caroline Lathan-Stiefel, Sterz, and Santiago Villanueva

**DIMENSIONS VARIABLE**

100 NE 11th St., Miami  
 DWNTWN ArtHouse  
 305-607-5527, [www.dimensionsvariable.net](http://www.dimensionsvariable.net)  
 Through August 10:  
 "The Surplus Bulletin" with Sophia Brown, Ingrid Cologne, Ben Holmberg, Dialaura LeFebvre, Ben Moore, David Kamm, Katelyn Kluge, Hannah Kosgaard, Robbie Scott, Rose Weselman, and Teresa Zaffarano

**DINA MITRANI GALLERY**

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## Culture: GALLERIES + MUSEUMS

786-486-7248  
www.dinamitrangallery.com  
Through August 31:

"Historic Process / Contemporary Visions" with Curtis Wehrfritz, Erin Malone, Fritz Liedtke, Gloria O'Connell, Heidi Kirkpatrick, Ken Lyon, Barbara Ciurej and Lindsay Lochman, Lisa Blair, Rachel Phillips and Rafael Balcazar

### DOT FIFTYONE ART SPACE

187 NW 27th St., Miami  
305-573-9994  
www.dotfiftyone.com

Through July 10:  
"Stairway to Heaven" by Pepe Lopez

### ELITE GALLERY

46 NW 36th St., Miami  
754-422-5942  
www.elitefineartgalleries.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### EMERSON DORSCH

151 NW 24th St., Miami  
305-576-1278  
www.emersondorsch.com  
Through July 20:

"INTRO" by Alan Gutierrez  
"I'll smile when i'm not sad" by Freya Powell

### ETRA FINE ART

50 NE 40th St., Miami  
305-438-4383  
www.etrafineart.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### FREDRIC SNITZER GALLERY

2247 NW 1st Pl., Miami  
305-448-8976  
www.snitzer.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### GALLERY 212 MIAMI CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

2407 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
516-532-3040  
www.gallery212miami.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### GALLERY DIET

174 NW 23rd St., Miami  
305-571-2288  
www.gallerydiet.com  
Through July 12:

"Violets Violence Silence" by Nathalie Provosty

### GARY NADER FINE ART

62 NE 27th St., Miami  
305-576-0256  
www.garynader.com  
Through July 30:

"Master's New Acquisitions" with various artists  
Through July 31:

"Back to Realism" with Cundo Bermudez, Fernando Botero, Claudio Bravo, Mario Carreno, Walter Goldfarb, Guillermo Kuitca, Wifredo Lam, Julio Larraz, Enrique Martinez Celaya, Victor Manuel, Armando Morales, Guillermo Muñoz Vera, Amelia Pelaez, Pablo Picasso, and Rufino Tamayo

### GENERAL AUDIENCE PRESENTS

769 NE 125th St., North Miami  
786-467-0941  
www.generalaudiencepresents.com  
Through July 13:

"Function+Will" by Luis Garcia-Nerey

### GREGG SHIENBAUM FINE ART

2239 NW 2nd Ave., Miami



**Kunlunzi, No. 34, Heavenly Voice, watercolor on canvas, 2013, at Nina Torres Fine Art.**

305-456-5478, www.gsfineart.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### HARDCORE ARTS CONTEMPORARY SPACE

3326 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-576-1645  
www.hardcoreartmiami.com  
Through August 10:

"No Hard Feelings" by Chanoir  
"Personal Is Political" with Fernando Arias, Milton Becerra, Henry Bermudez, Efrén Candelaria, Manuela Covini, Leslie Gabaldon, Mariana Monteagudo, Magnus Sigurdarson, and Ruben Torres Llorca  
"Preserving the Void" by Jonathan Rockford

### HAROLD GOLEN GALLERY

2294 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-989-3359, www.haroldgolengallery.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### IDEOBOX ARTSPACE

2417 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-576-9878, www.ideobox.com  
Through July 5:  
"Square Totem" by Jesus Matheus

### JUAN RUIZ GALLERY

301 NW 28th St., Miami  
786-310-7490  
www.juanruizgallery.com  
Through August 3:  
"One" by Carlos Quintana

### KABE CONTEMPORARY

123 NW 23rd St., Miami  
305-573-8142  
www.kabecontemporary.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### KAVACHNINA CONTEMPORARY

46 NW 36th St., Miami  
305-448-2060  
www.kavachnina.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### KELLEY ROY GALLERY

50 NE 29th St., Miami  
305-447-3888, www.kelleyroygallery.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### KIWI GALLERY

48 NW 29th St., Miami  
305-200-3047  
www.kiwiartsgroup.com  
Ongoing:  
William John Kennedy's Fine Art Photography  
Collection of Early Pop Artists

### KIWI ARTS GROUP PROJECT SPACE

117 NE 1st Ave., ground floor, Miami  
305-213-1495  
www.kiwiartsgroup.com  
Through August 23:  
"William John Kennedy: The Warhol Museum Edition" by William John Kennedy

### LELIA MORDOCH GALLERY

2300 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
786-431-1506, www.galerieleliamordoch.com  
July 13 through August 31:  
"Silent Music" with Laura Nilini, Emanuele Viscuso, Alain Le Boucher, and Emanuelle Fillot  
Reception July 13, 5 to 9 p.m.

### LOCUST PROJECTS

3852 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-576-8570, www.locustprojects.org  
July 13 through August 20:  
"LAB: Locust Arts Builders" with Macki Alvarez-Mena, Cindy Becerra, Lissette Carballo, Ellana Cohen, D'anyerlo Duque, Matthew Figueroa, Juan J Garcia, Ilan Gihuly, Catalina Ruiz Luzio, Bernadata Majauskaite, Dillon McDermott, Jon Millan, Daniella Perez, Lisette del Pino, Summer Pizura, Karen Ramirez, Armand Reyes, Antonio Robbins, Ethan Romano, Gisselle Ruiz, Magdiel Santana, Melodie Suarez, Maile Torres, Juan "Tanooki" Vinasco, and Maya Yosub  
Reception July 13, 7 to 10 p.m.

### MARKOWICZ FINE ART

114 NE 40th St., Miami  
786-362-5546  
www.markowiczfineart.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE, CENTRE GALLERY

300 NE 2nd Ave., Miami  
Bldg. 1, Room 1365  
305-237-3696  
www.mdc.edu  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART AND DESIGN

Freedom Tower  
600 Biscayne Blvd., Miami  
305-237-7700  
www.mdc.edu  
Through August 10:  
"FLASHBACK: Miami 1980s" by Alexia Fodere, Donna Natale Planas, and Charles Trainor, Jr.  
Through August 17:  
"Imagining La Florida: Juan Ponce de León and the Quest for the Fountain of Youth" with various artists  
"Invisible Presence" by Yovani Bauta  
Through September 21:  
"A Poetic Reality: Magical Realism of the CINTAS Fellows Collection" with various artists

### MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE, NORTH GALLERY

11380 NW 27th Ave., Miami  
305-237-1532  
www.mdc.edu

Through July 18: "Aperture 2013" with various artists  
**MYRA GALLERIES**  
177 NW 23rd St., Miami  
631-704-3476, www.myragalleries.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### NEW WORLD GALLERY

New World School of the Arts  
25 NE 2nd St., Miami  
305-2 37-3597  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### NINA TORRES FINE ART

1800 N. Bayshore Dr., Miami  
305-395-3599  
www.ninatorresfineart.com  
July 5 through 31:  
"Heavenly Voice" by Kunlunzi  
Reception July 5, 7 to 10 p.m.

### NOW CONTEMPORARY ART

175 NW 25th St., Miami  
305-571-8181, www.nowcontemporaryart.com  
July 13 through August 31:  
"Now Upon a Time" by Augusto Esquivel

### O. ASCANIO GALLERY

2600 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-571-9036, www.oascaniogallery.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### ONCE ARTS GALLERY

170-C NW 24th St., Miami  
786-333-8404  
www.oncearts.com  
Ongoing:  
Pablo Gentile, Jaime Montana, Jaime Apraez, and Patricia Chaparro

### OXENBERG FINE ART

50 NE 29th St., Miami  
305-854-7104  
www.oxenbergart.com  
Through July 31: "Pools of Light" with various artists

### PAN AMERICAN ART PROJECTS

2450 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-573-2400  
www.panamericanart.com  
Through July 6:  
"Argentine Photography" with Gian Paolo Minelli, Santiago Porter, Graciela Sacco, Pablo Soria, and Lucia Warck-Meister

### PRIMARY PROJECTS

4141 NE 2nd Ave., Suite 104, Miami  
www.primaryprojectspace.com  
info@primaryflight.com  
www.primaryprojectspace.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### ROBERT FONTAINE GALLERY

2349 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-397-8530  
www.robertfontainegallery.com  
Through October 4:  
"Chronology: A Timeline, Select Fine Art Works, Post War to Today" with various artists

### SPINELLO PROJECTS

2930 NW 7th Ave., Miami  
786-271-4223  
www.spinelloprojects.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

### SWAMPSPACE GALLERY

150 NE 42nd St., Miami  
http://swampspace.blogspot.com/  
swampstyle@gmail.com



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## Culture: GALLERIES + MUSEUMS

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**THE LUNCH BOX GALLERY**  
310 NW 24th St., Miami  
305-407-8131  
www.thelunchboxgallery.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information

**THE SCREENING ROOM**  
2626 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
Through July 11:  
"We Are Where We Are Not" by Carola Bravo

**UNDER THE BRIDGE**  
12425 NE 13th Ave., North Miami  
305-978-4437  
Call gallery for exhibition information

**UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI GALLERY**  
2750 NW 3rd Ave., Ste 4, Miami  
305-284-3161  
www.as.miami.edu/art  
July 13 through 26:  
"Stonehenge Series I & II" by Brian Curtis  
Reception July 13, 2 to 9 p.m.

**UNIX FINE ART GALLERY**  
2219 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-496-0621  
www.unixfineart.com  
Ongoing: Alexis Torres

**WALTMAN ORTEGA FINE ART**  
2233 NW 2nd Ave., Miami  
305-576-5335  
www.waltmanortega.com  
Through July 10:  
"Contemporary Photography" with Tali Amitai-Tabib, Jean-Pierre Attal, Nathalie and Olivier Borst, François Ronsiaux, and Aleix Plademunt

**WYNWOOD WALLS**  
NW 2nd Avenue between 25th and 26th streets  
305-573-0658  
www.thewynwoodwalls.com  
Ongoing:  
"Wynwood Walls" with Retna, How & Nosm, Roa, b., The Date Farmers, Saner, Segó, Liqen, Neuzz, Faile, Vhils, Interesni Kazki, Kenny Scharf, Nunca, Shepard Fairey, Aiko, Ryan McGinness, Stelios Faitakis, and avaf

**YELEN ART GALLERY**  
294 NW 54th St., Miami  
954-235-4758, www.yeelenart.com  
Call gallery for exhibition information  
**ZADOK GALLERY**  
2534 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-438-3737, www.zadokgallery.com  
Through July 4:  
"Reclaimed Miami" with various artists  
"20 Shades of Grey" with various artists

### MUSEUM & COLLECTION EXHIBITS

**ARTCENTER/SOUTH FLORIDA**  
800 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach  
305-674-8278, www.artcentersf.org  
Through July 28:  
"Unpredictable Patterns of Behavior" with Ramon Bofill, George Goodridge, Felice Grodin, Peter Hammar, Monad Studio, Temisan Okpaku, Punto, Ryan Roa, Matt Sheridan, Anne Morgan Spalter, Alex Trimino, and Sarah Walker

**BASS MUSEUM OF ART**  
2100 Collins Ave., Miami Beach  
305-673-7530  
www.bassmuseum.org  
Through July 21:  
"From Picasso to Koons: The Artist as Jeweler" with various artists  
Through August 11:  
"Rufus Corporation" by Eve Sussman

**CIFO (Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation)**  
1018 N. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-455-3380, www.cifo.org  
Call for exhibition information

**CRAIG ROBINS COLLECTION**  
3841 NE 2nd Ave., Miami  
Dacra  
305-531-8700, www.dacra.com  
Ongoing:  
Richard Tuttle, Marlene Dumas, John Baldessari, Elizabeth Peyton, and Kai Althoff, curated by Tiffany Chestler

**DE LA CRUZ COLLECTION CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE**  
23 NE 41st St., Miami  
305-576-6112, www.delacruzcollection.org  
Ongoing:  
"Works from the Collection of Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz" with various artists  
Ongoing:



Curtis Wehrfritz, *Ava*, daguerrotype, 2010, at Dina Mitrani Gallery.

Carlos Alfonzo

**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FROST ART MUSEUM**  
10975 SW 17th St., Miami  
305-348-2890, thefrost.fiu.edu  
Through August 20:  
"Bang!" by Robert Einbeck  
Through August 25:  
"Spanish Colonial Art: The Beauty of Two Traditions" with various artists, curated by Carol Damian  
"Borders of Paradise: In the Eyes of Explorers" with various artists  
Through September 3: "The Drawing Project" with various artists, curated by Emmy Mathis  
Through September 8:  
"Six Degrees of Separate Nations" by Ebony G. Patterson and Peterson Kamwathi  
Through December 31:  
"Deep Blue" by Javier Velasco

**LOWE ART MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI**  
1301 Stanford Dr., Coral Gables  
305-284-3535  
www.lowemuseum.org  
Through October 13:  
"Pan American Modernism: Avant-Garde Art in Latin America and the United States" with various artists  
Through February 9:  
"Terrestrial Paradises: Imagery from The Voyages of Captain James Cook" with various artists  
Through April 27:  
"The Art of Panama" with various artists

**MIAMI ART MUSEUM**  
101 W. Flagler St., Miami  
305-375-3000  
www.miamiartmuseum.org  
Call for exhibition information

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**  
770 NE 125th St., North Miami  
305-893-6211  
www.mocanomi.org  
Through September 8:  
"Picturing People" by Dawoud Bey

**THE MARGULIES COLLECTION**  
591 NW 27th St., Miami  
305-576-1051  
www.margulieswarehouse.com  
Call for exhibition information

**THE RUBELL FAMILY COLLECTION**  
95 NW 29th St., Miami  
305-573-6090  
http://rfc.museum  
Through August 2: "Alone Together" with various artists

**VIZCAYA MUSEUM AND GARDEN**  
3251 S. Miami Ave., Miami  
305-250-9133  
www.vizcayamuseum.org  
Call for exhibition information

**WORLD CLASS BOXING**  
Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection  
170 NW 23rd St., Miami  
305-438-9908  
www.worldclassboxing.org  
Call for exhibition information

Compiled by Melissa Wallen  
Send listings, jpeg images, and events information to

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MOCA Education programs are funded in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment of the Arts, with the additional support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Council, the Miami-Dade Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, the Irma Branan Creative Arts Scholarship Fund, Mickey and Madeline Arison Family Foundation, and The Children's Trust. The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County, the Arnold S. Katz Endowment, City of North Miami, Jan & Dan Lewis, Stephanie & Tom Bloom, Bank of America, Ethel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Peacock Foundation, the Columbine Foundation, The Fine and Greenwald Foundation, Bloomfield and Macy's, MOCA Art Institute is funded by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation as part of its Knight Arts Challenge. The Museum of Contemporary Art is accredited by the American Association of Museum and is a recipient of the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.





### The Rocket's Red Glare

There is nothing like seeing fireworks burst over a bay; the reflections from the water make the lights ten times more vivid. And we have one of the best urban bay sight lines in the world, which is why **America's Birthday Bash at Bayfront Park** is one of the year's highlights. On **Thursday, July 4**, fireworks barges will roam Biscayne Bay downtown — in a very eco-friendly way, of course — and create a magnificent light show. There will be a special kids' zone from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., with fireworks beginning at 9:00 p.m. at Bayfront Park (301 Biscayne Blvd.). No bottles, cans, or coolers allowed. Admission is free. Go to [www.bayfrontparkmiami.com](http://www.bayfrontparkmiami.com).

### Digging the Past

Miami's downtown riverfront is simply unrecognizable from a few years ago. Although the greenway is not complete, you can stroll along the water these days, actually encounter people, and watch the river traffic. You can also take in historical buildings and the archaeologically significant Miami Circle, the Tequesta Indian site believed to be more than 1500 years old. **The Miami Circle and Miami River Eco-Walk**, from HistoryMiami (101 W. Flagler St.), is a great way to follow the new form our urban core is taking. On **Sunday, July 7**, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., historian Frank Schena will lead a tour through the new, the old, and the ancient Miami. Cost is \$20 for members, \$30 for nonmembers. Call 305-375-1621 or go to [www.historymiami.org](http://www.historymiami.org).

### Who Killed Che?

Che Guevara, the Argentine revolutionary who played a key role in the Cuban revolution, still fascinates. In **Hunting Che**, two veteran war correspondents — Mitch Weiss and Kevin Maurer — lay out the very active role the American government played in Che's execution in Bolivia, including the Green Berets who helped hunt him down. They'll read excerpts from their work at Books and Books (265 Aragon

Ave., Coral Gables) on **Tuesday, July 9**, at 8:00 p.m. The event is free. Go to [www.booksandbooks.com](http://www.booksandbooks.com).

### The Lively Life of Lima

The **International Hispanic Theater Festival**, one of the largest Hispanic-themed festivals in the world, is back for its 28th year. This edition, which runs from **Thursday, July 11, through Sunday, July 28**, will highlight Peru, and kicks off with *Kimba Fâ: La Ciudad Suena*. A contemporary look at Lima's diverse cultures, it's a sort of Peruvian *Stomp*, with the instruments being glass bottles, bamboo, buckets, and pipes. Performances are July 11 and July 12 at 8:30 p.m. at the Carnival Studio Theater at the Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. Go to [www.arshtcenter.org](http://www.arshtcenter.org).

### Playing to a PAX House

The Performing Arts Exchange (PAX) has flown under the radar for too long: It's one of the serious, live-music venues in town. There are Tango Tuesdays, Latin rock nights, jazz evenings, regular performances by the Spam Allstars, and now, an appearance by one of Miami's best Cuban-born singers, Luis Bofill. He disappeared from the scene for a while, but is back with his most danceable music. Bofill will take the stage on

**Friday, July 12**, starting at 10:00 p.m. at PAX (337 SW 8th St.). Tickets are \$10. Go to [www.paxmiami.com](http://www.paxmiami.com).

### The Moorish, the Merrier

Few places can equal Opa-locka for eccentric architecture. In the 1920s, aviation pioneer Glen Curtiss had the idea to create a city based on *The Arabian Nights*, a Middle Eastern oasis filled with Moorish architecture in the middle of Miami. While Florida has always been considered somewhat of a fantasy space, this topped it all. In conjunction with the exhibit "Opa-locka: Mirage City," on **Saturday, July 13**, from noon till 5:00 p.m., HistoryMiami (101 W. Flagler St.) will host **Family Fun Day: Adventures in Architecture**, where kids and adults can absorb the designs of Opa-locka and then create their own unique, quirky architecture for a city. The event is free. Go to [www.historymiami.org](http://www.historymiami.org).

### The Gables by Water

To some, Coral Gables is an overly tidy, overly regulated community with eerily similar buildings, but look at it from its numerous canals and you'll get a different sense of the place. Take in the abundant, semi-tropical vegetation and the nooks and crannies of the City Beautiful — which it really is when you see it from



### Bunny Is Back

Some say Bunny Yeager is the most celebrated photographer in South Florida. Since the 1950s she has been shooting female models for magazine covers, helping make both the models (including Bettie Paige) and the magazines (*Playboy*) famous. Now in her 80s, Yeager is back with "**Bunny Yeager: Both Sides of the Camera**", a new show of photographs featuring actress Paz de la Huerta of the HBO series *Boardwalk Empire*, at the Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale (1 E. Las Olas Blvd.). It runs through October 6. Admission is \$14. Go to [www.moafll.org](http://www.moafll.org).

its backyard, while paddling its hinterland. The **Waterway Canoe Adventure** from Miami-Dade Park and Recreation starts at 9:00 a.m. and runs through noon on **Saturday, July 13**. Cost is \$30. Go to [www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures](http://www.miamidade.gov/ecoadventures).

### Mermaids Making a Splash

If you hadn't heard, mermaids have made a big comeback, so much so that the U.S. government put out a statement that, according to science, they don't exist. Well, don't tell that to the kids who will see *The Little Mermaid* at the Aventura Arts and Cultural Center (3385 NE 188th St.) on **Friday, July 19, and Saturday, July 20**. Based on the fairy tale and the Disney movie, the play follows mermaid Ariel, who wants to leave her ocean home for the dry world. Performances are at various times from morning till evening. Tickets are \$10. Go to [www.aventuracenter.org](http://www.aventuracenter.org).

Compiled by BT arts editor Anne Tschida. Please send information and images to [calendar@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:calendar@biscaynetimes.com).



### Art of the Summer

In a testament to how we are no longer a seasonal city, two of Miami's major private art collections will remain open throughout the summer — and they hold some of the best contemporary art found anywhere in the world. The de la Cruz Collection in the Design District (23 NE 41st St.) has its group show, along with a special exhibit of works from the late, underrated Cuban artist Carlos Alfonzo. At the Rubell Family Collection (95 NW 29th St.) are monumental paintings from Chinese artist Zhu Jinshi (pictured here). Admission to the Rubell collection is \$10; the de la Cruz is free. Go to [www.delacruzcollection.org](http://www.delacruzcollection.org) or [www.rfc.museum](http://www.rfc.museum).

# Biscayne Crime Beat

Compiled by Derek McCann

## Next Game: Pants Versus Skins

700 Block of NE 55th Terrace

With the Miami Heat repeating, we are a proud city. Everyone wants a piece of the action. A basketball enthusiast decided to play b-ball with some buddies. According to the police report, he stripped off his pants and left them on the side of the court. After a round of play, he discovered his pants were missing and, with them, his wallet. Guess the sight of a sweaty man walking the streets in his underwear has become pretty common in Miami, because no one called in to report seeing him on his way home. Friends, don't take your pants off in public, for any reason, ever.

## Another Case for the Virtual Office

3500 Block of Biscayne Boulevard

You think you're safe at work? It is not only Dodge City in the streets, but maybe within the confines of your cubicle farm. You want to use the restroom? You better bring your valuables. This office worker went to the company restroom, only to find his cell phone missing upon returning to his desk. There were no witnesses. Was it the new guy with the piercings and tattoos, or the cranky old receptionist with the personal vendetta? The victim could stake out the water cooler, try to pump some of his office mates for information, but that

would require leaving his desk, and we know how that turned out the last time.

## Miami, We Have a Problem

6995 Biscayne Blvd.

With a name like the Saturn Motel, one would assume an advanced system of service and security. Let's look to the future! Well, the future in Miami is apparently a lot like the present. A customer rented a room and decided to leave the door ajar as he checked out. After all, why bother to close it? "Not my responsibility." Within the hour (surprised it took that long), one of our Boulevard opportunists stole a 32-inch flat-screen television out of the room. No witnesses and no video at this galactic outpost.

## Banks Are For Losers

100 Block of NE 14th Street

Most people keep their money in a bank. This victim chose another option:



keeping \$500 tucked under his computer keyboard. Of course it went missing, so he called police. While we are grateful for the tech geeks of the world, it is obvious their level of social functioning leaves much to be desired. First he accused the maintenance man, then took it back. Then he accused a visitor, and took

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that back. There are no leads at press time. Maybe in the future he can hide his savings under his *Star Trek* memorabilia. Assuming he keeps his collection in the bedroom, this will, at the very least, guarantee that no female thief will ever come across his money.

### Deep Pockets

4600 Block of NE 2nd Avenue

At this gas station convenience store, a man calmly walked to the refrigerated case in the back and began grabbing beers. He managed to pull seven beers from the case and put all seven in his pockets. Most people can barely fit their wallet and a pack of cigarettes in their pants, so this guy had on some special jeans. He walked past the register and left the store. No arrest at press time, but if you see someone with very wide, bumpy hips, you may want to phone in a tip. Either that, or find out what brand of pants the guy wears, as those are some serious work duds.

### A Buck Can't Buy You Luck

NE 11th Street and N. Miami Avenue

Many of us know the feeling of being down to our last dollar. It has happened

to the best of us in these challenging times. This man is a bit different. Police stopped him because he was walking in an area known for narcotics crime. When approached, the man told officers: "I only have a dollar; they would not sell me anything." Police searched his pockets and found a bag of weed and the obligatory vial of crack cocaine. Guess the drug dealers gave him back some change. The man was promptly arrested. We're guessing bail starts somewhere north a buck.

### Would-be iPod Thief Called for Technical Foul

800 Block of NE 132nd Street

The victim was playing basketball with his friends — it really has become the new national pastime — when three young men approached. They asked to play. Maybe this works in movies like *White Men Can't Jump*, but in Miami? Not so much. After several minutes of play, the mood must have soured as the victim and his friends called it a day. As they were leaving, one of the invited players showed his appreciation by punching the victim in the face. Then he and his

two friends tried to take the victim's backpack, which contained an iPod. The victim ran into a nearby store, followed by the three thugs. Eventually they ran off and the victim got to keep his backpack.

### Nothing Strange About That

1500 Block of NE 127th Street

This poor man came home and found several items missing, including his videogame system and two flat-screen televisions (one of them a 70-inch). For good measure, the crooks raided his liquor cabinet. At this secure building — which has recently been repainted beige, but still looks like a jail — there were no witnesses. Because two men (it would have taken two) running from the scene of a crime, carrying a 70-inch flat-screen TV is an otherwise unremarkable sight in North Miami.

### Cindy Crawford Strikes Again

13600 Block of NE 12th Avenue

We already know North Miami is a land of misfits (this writer is a proud resident), and this means bizarre items are usually taken in burglaries. A mystery subject vandalized a stereo, but did not steal it. We guess he wanted a Bose and was not

happy when he found a Kenford. Nevertheless, items missing from the scene included a peach-colored, plastic bottle of lotion, a gold perfume box, and a brown jewelry box containing cheap costume jewelry. The lotion must have been the main target, as we know how dry skin can bother a criminal. Please keep your daily facial treatment under lock and key.

### Cooking Up a Crime

6700 Block of NE 1st Court

Eviction is a horrific process; no one enjoys it. Some people, though, try to make the best of it. Take this family. After being evicted from their residence, in full view of security cameras — not to mention the neighbors — they decided they were entitled to their old stove. The security cameras caught the father and son bringing the stove down the stairs. Warrants are out for their arrest. Crime Beat readers will recall incidents of toilets being stolen under similar circumstances. If this kind of thing continues, in the future Miami landlords may eliminate appliances and fixtures altogether.

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# A Poor Plateau

Is this park really the best we can do for children in the Gratigny neighborhood?

By **Jim W. Harper**  
BT Contributor

When people call Miami a Third World country, they are thinking of places like Gratigny Plateau Park. This place is not a park. It is a joke.

The joke is being played on the children of Miami-Dade County, where a majority live more than a mile from a county park. They are trapped inside a concrete jungle, like the one surrounding Gratigny Plateau Park on NW 117th Street, just west of I-95. Modest single-family homes repeat relentlessly for miles on end without the relief of an open space or a cluster of native trees.

Then you drive past an empty lot. It has space for about four houses, based on the properties that surround it. Looking at Google Maps, you see that it is labeled a “park.”

Since when does an empty lot qualify as a park? It is listed officially as one of Miami-Dade’s 250-plus parks. Yet there is no sign here to indicate a park. No bench to sit on, and hardly any trees.

I asked a tree trimmer I saw there if this was, indeed, Gratigny Plateau Park. He said he didn’t know; he was working

on an adjacent yard.

Gratigny Plateau Park is in fact an empty lot. Where does the county find the audacity to call it a park?

Imagine if a family of tourists played a game of park roulette, where they randomly selected a local park to visit as part of their vacation, and they landed in Gratigny Plateau Park. Here is what they would see:

In the middle of a residential street, a blue-and-white ice cream truck covered in stickers and labeled “Kiki Kone” is parked in front of a house. Next to that house is an empty lot. Across the street is a doublewide empty lot, and across the next street is another empty lot. One of these lots has some shade provided by mature royal poinciana trees, the only highlight of this scavenger hunt gone wrong.

Crossing the street, five wooden slats stand beneath a utility pole. These unidentified sticks are the only standing structure in the entire “park.”

A small, sad sapling of a fruit tree sits alone in the middle of the double lot. (Well, there is the very tall carcass of another tree, clearly dead, yet curiously propped up by supports.) Empty boxes of fireworks litter the weedy grass.



BT photos by Jim W. Harper

**You call this a park? Miami-Dade County does.**

At the third lot, a skinny black-and-white cat stands guard. In one corner, a roll of chain-link fencing lies among the sticks and stones. The human touch is also evident by pieces of rock and broken tile that have been scattered in a circle around the trunks of trees. Call it urban mulch.

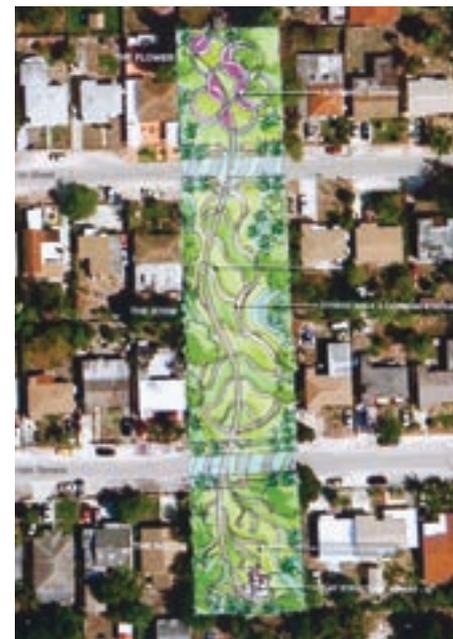
At the base of a utility pole is a large, discarded object with white pipes and a gray, upside-down tank that is holding standing water, a common breeding ground for mosquitoes. The tank’s label says “Huron Tech Systems.”

End scene. Because that’s about all there is to see in glorious Gratigny Plateau Park. I did not find the Gratigny, I did not find the plateau, and I certainly did not find what I would call a park.

The good news is that some people have been paying attention to Gratigny Plateau Park, and plans for its makeover have already been sketched. The bad news is that plans have been in development for more than a year, and it remains unclear how this project will be financed.

The county clearly has enough funds to convert a small, neighborhood park like this into a decent playground. But will they allocate that money to an obscure project in a poor neighborhood?

District 2 County Commissioner Jean Monestime held community meetings beginning in May of last year to engage local residents in discussing the park’s future. The project gained momentum and competed in an online contest for a grant from Kiwanis Clubs International. Cheerleading for Gratigny Plateau Park in the contest was WPLG-Channel 10. The station’s anchors even participated in a photo-op at the “park,” complete with shovels



**The EDSA design intentionally resembles a flower.**

and white hard hats. Despite all this, the park failed to earn enough online votes to qualify for the Kiwanis money.

Efforts to improve the park continue, with cooperation from the Kiwanis of North Miami Beach-Sunny Isles, the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, Miller Construction, and EDSA, the international architecture and planning firm that created sketches of the proposed makeover. The highly professional design shows, from an aerial perspective, a giant flowering plant with roots and leaves. The flower portion covers the park’s three respective lots. Viewed from above, the tall and narrow flower is framed by endless rooftops.

The Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation Department, working with its affiliated Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, acknowledges on its Website that this park is “underdeveloped.” It lists Gratigny Plateau Park as one of its

## GRATIGNY PLATEAU PARK

**Park Rating**  
★★★★★

**885 NW 117th St.**  
**Miami**  
**305-694-4889**  
**Hours:** Sunrise to sunset  
**Picnic tables:** No  
**Barbecues:** No  
**Picnic pavilions:** No  
**Tennis courts:** No  
**Athletic fields:** No  
**Night lighting:** No  
**Swimming pool:** No  
**Playground:** No



Behold the only standing structure anywhere in the "park."



A sad sapling sits alone in the middle of the double lot.



No shade: A long-dead tree still has supports bracing it.

fundraising targets, and individuals are encouraged to make tax-free donations at [parkstore.miamidade.gov](http://parkstore.miamidade.gov).

These laudable efforts are part of a growing trend to create public-private partnerships for park funding in an era of budget cuts. But when will this partnership pull into port?

This park is begging to go from zero to hero. It needs a champion, or a

business with a conscience, to adopt it, and pledge \$250,000 to its development. The county should match this amount and make it happen. All the equation needs now is that donor.

Are you out there, savior of Gratigny Plateau Park?

The children of this working-class neighborhood are just as deserving of a playground as any other children. How

much longer will they have to wait?

The poverty of Greater Miami can be as shocking as its wealth. This extreme dichotomy is a major reason why our area falls, for many, into the category of Third World.

A reality of the Third World is that poor, huddled masses of children suffer, while not far away, wealthy barons drink chilled cocktails in private

cabanas behind iron gates. These barons represent both private citizens and the collective public, because nobody is taking responsibility.

Doesn't Miami have enough places to drink cocktails? Grow up and give our children a playground.

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# One Bite At a Time

Summer is here, and so are the winged pests that gobble us up

By Wendy Doscher-Smith  
BT Contributor

I'm sitting here with peanut butter smeared on a portion of my right, upper hamstring, vanilla-sprinkle-cookie-scented antibacterial hand gel tingling near the inside of my right knee, oh-so-minty toothpaste gel dabbed dangerously close to my crotch... and still I itch.

There is a baking-soda-and-water paste caking on the side of my right knee. I just dipped a Q-tip in rubbing alcohol and applied it to a neighboring area.

Yesterday I tried drops of apple cider vinegar on my right wrist and forearm. I slapped a strip of sliced American cheese on my calf. Aspen, one of my dogs,

stealthily snagged it off of my leg before I could truly determine its efficacy.

I am not vying for a spot on *America's Top Herbalist Panacea Concoctor*. Nor am I writing a thesis titled "Dieting Through Osmosis: Topical Application of Fatty Foods as a Cure for Obesity." I'm trying to relieve my bug bite aftermath.

I did something stupid the other day. I went to a waterside area near dusk sans bug spray. I felt the bites, I swatted, but I stayed. Parts of my body now resemble a Seurat painting. Chances are, if you leave your house this summer, you will encounter insects. As commonplace in Miami as the sun itself are biting insects, and they are hungry.

You don't even have to leave your property to become a tasty dish. Just



BT photo by Wendy Doscher-Smith

take a slight reprieve in your yard, maybe near that newly installed, fancy birdbath/fountain. It's pretty. It gives the garden that needed lift, and it seemed like a good idea. Listen to the gentle whirr of the motor, see the lily pads lazily float by the grinning frog sculpture. Ah. This is the life. This is... buzzzzz... ouch...smack... a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

This is Miami, stupid. And during the summer, this is all of our lives. Our fate is, in part, in the hands (if they had them) and wings of insects. We are living pin cushions.

Bugs like me. I'm always the first one to get bitten. I'm the bait, the cover for everyone else. While my friends prep the canoe or stake the tent, I swat at myself. I'm sweet. I'm Vitamin B deficient. And

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mosquitoes, for one, relish that. If I had an online dating profile, I'd get hundreds — thousands — of gentlewoman female callers. (They're the biters.)

Getting enough Vitamin B is a good preventative, but it won't stop the onslaught. Luckily, remedies extend way beyond drugstore aisles lined with calamine lotion. I'm talking everything from cottage cheese to witchcraft to religion (Saint Rita is the patron saint for gardeners) to pennies (but only the old ones made from copper will do) to hairspray. Mouthwash, tea tree oil, hemorrhoid cream... the list goes on. (It makes me wonder: Did I use the correct cheese on my leg. What if I needed feta?)

Here is my much anticipated and highly acclaimed *Guide to Top 305 Summer Biters: Who They Are, What They Want, and How To Defeat Them*. After my recent attack and resulting treatments, I feel qualified to tell you what to do — er, to make suggestions.

Firstly: The mosquito. It's not like the mosquito would ever win any popularity contest, but once summer descends upon Miami, enveloping residents in its steamy embrace, the mosquito becomes

Public Enemy #1, topping the 305's Most Wanted Biter list. Besides causing itchy, red bumps, some mosquitoes also carry West Nile virus, malaria, eastern equine encephalitis, and dengue fever.

And this summer, the mighty gallinipper may also pay us a visit, thanks to the heavy rains from Tropical Storm Andrea, which set the perfect scene for gallinipper egg hatching.

The gallinipper, or "mosquito on steroids," is the size of a quarter, can weigh 20 times what a regular mosquito weighs, and can deliver a much nastier bite. If a gallinipper uses you as a landing strip, you'll likely know it, as it has been compared to a small bird. Quick! Alert Hitchcock!

But gallinippers are not the only winged critters to worry about. There are more than 2700 species of mosquitoes in the world. Of the 80 species found in Florida, 33 are pests and 13 species can transmit disease. They release saliva into the bite area, causing a reaction. However, the mosquito's bite and resulting itch is far from the worst of it.

Mosquitoes have friends, and they all party in Miami. Humans do. Apparently the insects got the message, too.

Chiggers, for one. They deliver a double whammy by elusively biting sensitive areas. Chigger larvae are smaller than 1/150th of an inch. Thus, unless you are making a new camping chic fashion statement and strut around with a magnifying glass medallion, you won't see them.

But they still suck. Oh, do they ever. Chiggers, like spiders, are in the arachnida class, and go through a few stages of development. The one that concerns us is the larva stage.

It is during this stage that they must gain strength before morphing into nymphs and, eventually, becoming adults. But they need our help. And, unlike other charities that offer you tote bags or calendars for donations, these critters just take, take, take! Like so many small creatures determined to make up for their tiny stature, chiggers suffer from a Napoleon complex.

Chiggers make quite the impression on us (literally), leaving behind bright red, incessantly itchy dots on the groin or the back of the knees. Unlike the (comparatively) lazy mosquito that takes its blood breakfast, calls it a day,

and then lounges by the pool in a woven hammock, chiggers are industrious and love to burrow into tight areas such as waistbands or under socks, where tasty and unsuspecting ankles lay in wait.

Chiggers are a threat to us when we are in damp, grassy areas. Larval chiggers attach to us and, unlike mosquitoes, don't suck our blood, but — and somehow, I find this even more disconcerting — stick us with a tissue-dissolving substance. Then they drink our tissue.

And of course there are the no-see-ums, a.k.a. "flying jaws." Like mosquitoes, the no-see-ums basically sit on us and then drink our blood, which they require to grow their eggs. Tip: They like lactic acid, so lay off the booze.

And how did my remedies fair? After trying the previously mentioned methods, I bathed with half-a-pound of baking soda, which helped. But then my feet and back itched. Maybe they felt left out. Everything worked a little. However, it was the drugstore visit for cortisone cream that won.

So you may want to remember that. Or start unrolling penny sleeves.

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# County Courthouse #3: Still Standing, Still Judging

A view of our past from the archives of HistoryMiami

By Paul S. George  
Special to the BT

Built between 1925 and 1928, the Dade County Courthouse was a singular building not only for Miami but for all of South Florida. Designed by Ten Eyck Brown, who also designed Los Angeles City Hall, which closely resembles our courthouse, and Walter DeGarmo, a prominent local architect, the building at 73 W. Flagler St. rose 27 stories above the flat streetscape of downtown Miami.

It remained the tallest building in South Florida until 1963, when the new

Ferre Building in the 200 block of Biscayne Boulevard eclipsed it by 12 feet.

The county courthouse, with its ziggurat-stepped roof, was a product of the heady days of Miami's great real estate boom. County officials expected the steep population rise of the first half of the 1920s to continue indefinitely. But when the boom collapsed in 1926, and the population failed to reach the earlier projections, the courthouse faced the prospects of ample empty space.

Consequently, the county invited the City of Miami, whose offices were located directly across Flagler Street from it, to move into the new building, which it did.

The City of Miami brought with it the city jail, which occupied, along with the county jail, several of the upper floors of the building. The city remained in the county courthouse until it moved to a new city hall at Dinner Key in 1954.

This move provided extra space for the growing Eleventh Judicial Circuit, as did the county's move to a new, nearby government building in 1985. The Eleventh Judicial Circuit is the fourth-busiest circuit in the United States, and many of the area's most celebrated cases — civil and criminal — have been heard in its courtrooms.



Photo courtesy of HistoryMiami, #X-0054-1

Dawn Hugh at 305-375-1623, [dhugh@historymiami.org](mailto:dhugh@historymiami.org)

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# The Color of the Season

Mushrooms are popping up, and so is a rainbow of Geiger

WBy Jeff Shimonski  
BT Contributor

I really like this time of year. All the rain, heat, and humidity has brought out the best in plants. There are flowering trees and shrubs everywhere.

I've been taking my camera out early in the morning to photograph all the different species of fungi popping up all over. I've seen some great specimens of stinkhorns, that brilliantly colored red and round ball that stinks like the inside of an old garbage can and attracts lots of flies.

If they annoy you, look for the white, half-dollar-size, egg-like structures from which they emerge. Just pick them and toss in the garbage. Puffballs have been plentiful, too. These mushrooms are usually colored brown and in the shape of little round balls. When squeezed, they emit a small, dark cloud of spores that looks like smoke.

Recently I was exploring my backyard when I came across a bolete, a good-size mushroom with a thick cap. It was probably edible, but I never eat any mushrooms if I'm not certain of their identification.

The really neat thing about some of these mushrooms, including boletes, is that they have mutually beneficial relationships with tree roots. I found my bolete underneath a large, mature live oak in my backyard. This was a good sign in regards to the health of the tree.

The meadow mushrooms have been plentiful. I wrote about them a while back. They are very closely related to the portobello and just as edible and tasty. The only drawback is they cannot be commercially produced because they are only edible for a few days and do not store well. As a result, they have to be picked and eaten within a day or so.

While we're in the mushroom department, I also have been finding very poisonous mushrooms in some very unlikely places. Even though quite beautiful, some of the amanitas are deadly poisonous, so, again, it is best not to pick *any* mushroom unless you really know what you're doing.

Aside from the interesting and striking forms of local mushrooms, another source of great color now is all the flowering trees. One of my favorites is *Cordia sebestena* or orange Geiger. The wrinkly, orange flowers can be quite eye-catching. The photo that accompanies this article was taken at Jungle Island, where we have grown many Geigers from seed.

Occasionally the orange Geiger is defoliated by a fingernail-size beetle called the Geiger beetle, which only seems to eat the foliage on this particular species of tree. Some years, when the beetle population is high, the trees never seem to get any decent foliage on them at all.

Since these trees are not too tall, I found a great nonchemical way to control



BT photo by Jeff Shimonski

The crinkly flowers of the orange Geiger tree.

the beetles. The adult beetle lays her eggs on the newest foliage, usually putting all eggs on a single leaf. When the eggs hatch, the larvae begin to eat that leaf immediately, creating little holes in it.

When looking up into the canopy of the tree, these holes are easily detected, with the light passing through a little group of holes surrounded by the dark green foliage of the surrounding leaf tissue.

I performed a study a few years ago in which I inspected a tree once a week, looking for the newest foliage. Upon seeing leaves with the telltale holes in them, I would handpick those leaves. This solved the problem by removing the tiny beetle larvae before they could spread throughout the canopy of the tree.

We have been using this kind of cultural control at the park and it has worked very well for us. If you can't reach the leaves by hand, use a pole clipper. No excuse for chemical use here.

The genus *Cordia* has within it about 300 species of trees and shrubs found worldwide in warmer climes. At the park we also grow another very attractive member of this genus, the yellow Geiger, or *Cordia lutea*. It

grows as a sprawling, small tree. The wood is fairly soft, so once the tree reaches 10 or 12 feet in height, it should be pruned to avoid being broken up by high winds.

Over time and with regular pruning, this tree will develop a stout trunk. This is a great plant for a sunny, wind-protected area in the landscape.

There is also the tree that grows natively in the Caribbean, the one Hispanics call "bocote." Its scientific name is *Cordia alliodora* and it is harvested for its workable wood.

Sometimes we'll even see a white-flowered, small tree in our local landscapes, the white Geiger, or *Cordia boissieri*, which is native to North America. It is common in Texas and not so common here, but attractive specimens really stand out when in bloom.

*Jeff Shimonski is an ISA-certified municipal arborist, director of horticulture at Jungle Island, and principal of Tropical Designs of Florida. Contact him at jeff@tropicaldesigns.com.*

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# The Darndest Things

A small sample wit and wisdom from the wee ones

By Crystal Brewe  
BT Contributor

Sometimes you've gotta just sit back and recall some of the tears-rolling-down-your-face-you're-laughing-so-hard moments of parenthood.

Our nearly nine-year old, Matilda, has had some real zingers over the years, and it's easy to forget that our four-year-old, Everly, has only been on this planet for 48 months with her wit. Their spin on things is the single most entertaining and rewarding part of this parenting job.

With that in mind, I thought I'd take a break from my regular format of shifting readers' perceptions and bringing monumental inspiration to present a list of funny things our kids have said in our short time as parents. (I am limited in length, people.) Enjoy.

Everly, upon realizing our mode of transportation was not what she had in mind: "I don't want to take an airplane. I want to take a *vacation!*"

Or how about: "Mommy, remember that meatloaf you made that made me throw up on the floor?"

When I had heartburn, Everly put her hand on her heart and said, "Ouch, Mommy. At school, Joshua got a rug burn."

At my cousin's wedding (as the bride was walking down the aisle) then two-year-old Matilda yelled, "Daddy, who are *you* marrying today?"

After a particularly fun night on the town without the children, we awoke to Everly standing over my husband saying, "Daddy, your breath tastes like Grandpa."

Then there are these off-the-cuff remarks: "I don't want to eat my dinner — I just want to eat my boogers!"

"I don't want anything wet to drink." "Mommy, remember that yummy breakfast you made for Mother's Day?"

Everly, on just about everything: "I don't want to be affiliated with this!"

"Mommy, it's okay if you pee in the pool."

"I hate that shirt — it has arm holes!"

"Daddy, why did you just eat that jelly bean off the floor?"

"Mommy, why is Grandpa so crazy?"

"Mom, jumping on the bed isn't fun anymore. I'm bored."

"The inside of my mouth is wet!"

"I don't like buttons because they smell like your breath in the morning."

Matilda wrote on her shirt with a Sharpie: "I may be a girl, but I'm still dangerous!"

Matilda wrote on her dad's shirt with a Sharpie: "I'm not shy, I just don't like you."

Everly, after we lost our dear family dog and, shortly thereafter, our neighbor's bird (that we were pet-sitting): "What is dead?"

Note to Tooth Fairy: "Dear Tooth Fairy, kindly pay me in books not cash."

Matilda, picking a tomato out of the garden: "Look at this tomato, it is



BT photo by Crystal Brewe

perfectly the size of a chipmunk's skull!" Then she happily bit into it.

On vocabulary homework that involved writing a sentence using the word *shop*: "Me and dad shop for toilets because we always clog ours."

Me: "Everly, you can't put ketchup on peanut butter and jelly." Response: "Oh, on the plate then?"

After the 27th "tardy," hubby tells Matilda: "I feel really bad about how often you're late to school, but you're usually reading the whole time." Matilda, looking up from her book: "What does reading have to do with school?"

Guess who about guess who: "I wanted a sister, not a *baby!*"

In a dressing room at Macy's: "Mommy, will my boobs hang down so low like that, too?"

Matilda, to perpetual bachelor uncle while he babysat: "What are you making us for dinner? Mustard packets?"

Everly, to same uncle upon seeing the messy state of his bedroom: "You need to rake your room!"

Matilda, upon hearing on the radio one of the songs I told her I "made up": "Mom, I can't believe you got them to play your song!"

Everly to Grandpa, who had just passed gas: "Bless you, Grandpa! That

was a big one!"

Matilda on discovering YouTube: "I love cat videos. I could just sit and watch them all day!" (Uh-oh.)

Everly, upon having an accident in her pants: "I was having too much fun to stop... I played Fun Factor and I lost!"

Upon seeing a group of Hasidic Jews as we crossed the MacArthur Causeway, Matilda, who had attended a Jewish daycare for three years, rolled down the window and yelled, "Look! My people!"

Matilda outing us to some neighbors: "Mommy and Daddy gave up on cloth diapers because it stressed them out."

During the potty-training ordeal, Everly accompanied me to a very busy public restroom. When I was finished, a very impressed Everly loudly applauded and exclaimed, "Good job peeing in the potty, Mommy!"

And then there are the random daily exchanges:

"Mommy, where's Daddy?"

"He's out of town on business"

"Wow, Daddy goes to business on vacation a lot!"

Send me your funny kid quotes for inclusion in the next installment.

Feedback: [letters@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:letters@biscaynetimes.com)

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# Reef Rewind

For too long, we've ignored one of our most precious natural resources, but we can change that

By **Jim W. Harper**  
BT Contributor

**C**oral Reefs 101 for mainland Florida: Here's the lowdown on what's out there and what you can do about it.

Where's the reef? Closer than a Wendy's restaurant, most likely. From any beach in Miami-Dade County, let your eyes drift east a half-mile or so, then plunge your imagination down about 40 feet. Welcome to the Great Florida Reef.

You can do the same along beaches in Broward, Palm Beach, and even parts of Martin County, because the nearly continuous reef stretches along the mainland for 100 miles north of Miami. This northern portion of Florida's coral reef is less studied than the longer, southern stretch along the Keys, but a group based in Miami is working to fill in the blanks — and they want your help.

The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative has launched a public outreach campaign called Our Florida Reefs, and its mission is to get people talking about how to manage the reefs north of the Keys. I am biased in favor of this project, because I helped create Our Florida Reefs (as part of a grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that ended in June).

The project held 12 community meetings across the region in June, including in northern and southern Miami-Dade, to jumpstart a dialogue that will build

momentum over the next two years.

The project has given me new clarity regarding one of the nation's greatest natural resources. South Florida is the only part of the continental U.S. with warm-water coral reefs, and they connect to the vast Atlantic and Caribbean reef systems. Our Florida Reefs could play a major role in revealing how people and our local reefs can coexist, because more people live near them than any other reef system in the world.

These reefs are shockingly close to the approximately 6 million people in urbanized southeastern Florida. All closer to the shoreline than is I-95, some reefs are actually so close to the beach that you can swim to them. Until about 2002, a natural reef existed in the shallows near South Pointe in South Beach, but it has been buried by sand, most likely from beach renourishment projects. Some longtime Miami Beach residents recall catching lobster from this reef.

My friend Luiz Rodrigues, executive director of the Environmental Coalition of Miami and the Beaches, has underwater photos of this former reef, and together he and I are developing plans to create an "artsy" artificial reef in its place. Stay tuned.

What can you do for Our Florida Reefs? Thanks for asking. The project is currently recruiting community representatives to join a task force that will assemble a blueprint of recommendations for the future management of the reefs.



We also want everyone with an opinion about local reefs to register an official comment on [OurFloridaReefs.org](http://OurFloridaReefs.org).

Today these reefs are less protected than you might think. While essentially all reefs in the Florida Keys are actively conserved, the same cannot be said for our other South Florida reefs. Certain rules and regulations apply, as in all state waters, but there is no comprehensive protection.

Here in Florida, we have experience with ecosystems that lack protection, and eventually we pay the price. For the Everglades, the price tag of restoration is hovering around \$20 billion.

We can do better with Our Florida Reefs, and they are certainly worth it. Our portion alone of the Florida Reef provides 61,000 jobs and produces \$5.7 billion annually in sales and income.

Additionally, during hurricane season, it's hard to overestimate the value of an underwater seawall that slows wave action. Reefs provide that service, among many others, and they look great doing it.

The biggest hurdle for Our Florida Reefs and any oceanic garden is likely the "out of sight, out of mind" mentality. Nearly half of South Florida's residents and

visitors don't even know that coral reefs exist offshore, according to surveys from the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative. This situation is like half of Brazil not knowing about the Amazon rainforest.

We have the rainforest of the sea right in our region's front yard. We might be forgiven our ignorance, however, because of the beach sand in our eyes. Our beaches — which include reef sand — are much more accessible and extensive than beaches in the Keys, but our reefs are less extensive and lack shallow, snorkel-friendly areas. And our economy and society is much more diverse than in the Keys, where the reef is a way of life.

Only recently, maps of the seafloor and surveys of fish have filled in major gaps in our scientific knowledge of our reef region. Plenty of anecdotal evidence exists in the minds of our area's boaters, divers, and fishers, and now they have a place to share that knowledge: Our Florida Reefs.

When it comes to protecting our local reefs, we can do better, and we must.

Send your tips and clever ideas to: [goinggreen@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:goinggreen@biscaynetimes.com).

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# Wines To Go With Your Burger

Red, white, and you: Agreeable wine for \$12 or less

By **Bill Citara**  
BT Contributor

With the arrival of summer and the Fourth of July, patriotic Americans of all stripes and sizes will proudly display the symbol of our great nation. Nothing says “America” quite like it, an instantly recognizable icon from Adelaide to Zagreb, Burkina Faso to Ulan Bator.

It holds an honored place in every American’s heart, and though we revere it throughout the year, it is at this time that it is even more special, a celebration of everything that is good and right and true about America.

I refer, of course, to the hamburger.

Sure, there are other symbols, other icons of country and culture. But few are so universal as the humble disc of ground beef, slapped into a fluffy bun and gilded with lettuce, tomato, onion, and a square of yellow cheese-like substance.

So for our annual column on the Ritual Charring of the Flesh that commemorates our nation’s birthday, VINO presents an array of wines chosen to complement the all-American burger as smashingly as mustard and mayo. USA! USA! USA!

As every red-blooded American knows, the one, true hamburger is made of beef. It can be pricey Wagyu, a mélange of exotic cuts, or the pink stuff at your local supermarket that’s ground up with the parts of animals you don’t even

want to think about — but any exploration of the beauties of the burger has to begin with beef.

And a red-blooded hamburger demands a red-blooded wine. I’m particularly partial to blends, which combine the flavor characteristics of several different grapes, with the result being a wine eager to go toe-to-toe with the meat, smoke, cheese, onions, pickles, mustard, catsup, and etcetera of your typical American burger.

One such wine bears the decidedly blue-collar moniker of **Red Truck**. The 2011 vintage blends Syrah, Petite Syrah, Petit Verdot, Merlot, and Grenache into a fruit-forward, black cherry-berry wine that comes off young and simple, but with appealing spice notes, medium body, and a modest 13.5 percent alcohol level that encourages backyard sipping.

A different and more assertive blend — Zinfandel, Merlot, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon — makes up the **2011 Apothic Red**. Though it’s a fuller bodied, more intensely flavored wine than the Red Truck — think summer-sweet blackberries infused with cloves and black pepper and distinct toasty cigar box notes — it actually is slightly lower in alcohol, and just as easy to drink.

Putting blue cheese and bacon on your burger? Then here’s the wine for you: the **2011 Cusumano Nero d’Avila**. This Sicilian wine pours almost black and delivers tantalizing aromas of blackberries and blueberries, dried figs, olives,

and spice. On the palate, it’s taut and peppery, with oak and dusky olive-tobacco notes balancing the youngish fruit.

While our burgers may begin with beef, they certainly don’t end there. Pork, turkey, chicken, seafood, assorted grains, and legumes all can take kindly to being formed into a patty and finished on the grill. If you’re giving your pork or poultry burger a multi-culti flavor — say, spiked with chorizo or fennel sausage or with a Vietnamese-style “pesto” of cilantro, garlic, and black pepper — a ballsy rosé would be an excellent partner.

The **2012 Anakena Enco Reserve Syrah Rosé**, for example. One whiff and it’s like you’re standing in the middle of a strawberry patch holding a vial of orange-flower water. Take a sip and it’s a burst of ripe strawberry fruit, then a creeping soft citrus acidity. It’s fruity, but not stupid; well balanced, but not austere. All in all, a very nice wine.

On the leaner, drier, earthier side is the **2011 Les Ligeriens Rosé D’Anjou**. It tastes of strawberries and raspberries, lemon and limestone, and is fruity enough to play well with chicken and turkey burgers, but with enough citrus acidity to be an equally good partner to a seafood patty. (Think chopped shrimp, tuna, or grouper seasoned with shallots and herbs and



The Les Ligeriens is a terrific value at \$7.99 and available at the Aventura ABC Fine Wine & Spirits (16355 Biscayne Blvd., 305-944-6525). Lorenzo’s Italian Center in North Miami Beach (16385 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-945-6381) is where you’ll find the Red Truck and Cusumano, both for \$9.99. And the North Miami Total Wine & More (14750 Biscayne Blvd., 305-354-3270) carries the Angeline and Anakena for \$10.99 each, and the Apothic Red for a near-saintly \$8.97.

bound with egg and panko.)

And speaking of seafood burgers (or my latest favorite, a ham-and-Swiss-cheese-stuffed chicken “Cordon Bleu” burger), an ideal wine to pour is the **Angeline 2012 California Chardonnay**. It’s got a rich, ripe nose that nods at tropical fruit, red apple, and orange, all of which carry over onto the palate, where it sits lightly and finishes quickly, leaving behind only a trace of orange-lemon-lime acidity. And, of course, the happy taste of an American icon.

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# Stay Home and Take Out

Food news we know you can use

By **Pamela Robin Brandt**  
BT Contributor

Last month's biggest local restaurant news story — big enough to hit national wires — happened in Biscayne Times territory. Unfortunately it wasn't good news: On the night of June 13 at **Shuckers Bar & Grill**, the back deck, packed with roughly 100 patrons watching a Miami Heat play-off game, collapsed into Biscayne Bay. While the water was only four feet deep (and the deck only five feet above the water), more than two dozen people were injured, two of them seriously enough to initiate a lawsuit against Shuckers owner, Charles Grentner and his family.

Meanwhile, restaurant openings, like Miami's growing season, seem to have slowed down for the summer. But openings still dwarf closings, and most encouragingly, this issue's newbies are all interesting indies rather than big-chain clones.

## OPENINGS

**Sumi Yakitori** (21 SW 11th St., 786-360-5570). From James Chen, perfectionist (and media-shy) owner of Momi Ramen Noodle House, this much-anticipated big brother is equally authentic, down to the coals over which the bamboo-skewered yakitori is grilled (a changing variety of sparsely seasoned and sauced meats, poultry, seafood, and veggies). Only imported white Binchan charcoal is allowed here, which may explain Sumi's

big prices for small portions. Good thing Sumi, unlike Momi, takes credit cards.

**Nikko by Sunshine** (186 SW 12th Terr., 305-418-0151). To the Brickell area's Asian fusion/sushi saturation there is indeed a solution: Find a gimmick that makes your sushi/Thai eatery stand out from the pack. And that's what Nikko's Thai-born chef/owner Sunshine (nickname of Sunchai Naknoon, former master sushi chef at China Grill and other swanky joints) has done in spades, according to opening press releases emphasizing this new "Modern Asian" restaurant's rattlesnake rolls, kangaroo curry, ostrich basil, and live goldfish garnishes. To clear things up: All the above are available, but only sometimes, as blackboard specials. Nikko's regular menu is normal sushi/Thai — curry and basil sauces with choice of beef/pork/seafood/chicken (rather than the reptile alleged to taste like chicken). Plating is indeed exceptionally artful, though, featuring edible sculptures like elegant carrot swans. (Fun food fact: The cuisines of both China and Thailand have been renowned for delicate, detailed food carving techniques for, literally, ages; this Modern Asian cuisine feature dates back to about 200 BC.)

**Lunch American Style** (221 NW 1st Ave., 305-379-1991). Oddly, this eatery's opening seems to have slipped in under most media radar, despite the fact that owner Adam Feigeles also owns newcomer Reggae Tacos (whose opening made a major media splash) and downtown institution The Filling Station &



Garage Bar. But the most impressive credential is the restaurant's ambitious regional menu (created with partner Rusty Johnson), inspired by favorite foods from all over the USA — some traditional (Louisiana shrimp po'boys, Kentucky's open-faced "hot brown" with candied bacon and rich mornay sauce), and some ingredient-driven inventions (Iowa corn puffs with horseradish remoulade). "Since 50 states is a lot," Rusty confesses, the regular menu covers just their top two dozen or so picks, with daily specials hitting neglected states' specialties. In addition, this ex-New Yorker notes, "We house-smoke our own pastrami."

**Ten Fruits** (143 NE 3rd Ave., 305-373-7678). Helping Miami to play catch-up with West Coast cities regarding the exploding national trend toward Super Juice Bars, this sleek spot serves juices and smoothies that don't just taste good but serve as remedies for a host of ills — and, in some cases, are nutritionally awesome enough to be full meal substitutes. Further, for those craving solid food, there's a limited eclectic menu including healthy salads (like orange/kale), empanadas, fresh-baked croissants or quiches, whole-wheat waffles, and a leftover from

the owning team's original concept, a homemade Greek-style yogurt so creamy you won't believe it's good for you.

## CLOSINGS

After 37 years in business, the **Crab House** (1551 NE 79th Street Cswy.) closed at the end of last month. (Likely replacement: high-rise residential.) It was the original in a 17-eatery Southeastern chain owned since 1995 by Houston-based Landry's Seafood Restaurants. Some back story: While Joe's Crab Shack chain has flourished under Landry's management, Miami's crab concept floundered. By 2003, only 11 Crab Houses remained. Now, only one is still open, in Edgewater, New Jersey. (Personally, I regret the loss of a landmark, but doubt that any other crab lover who attempted in recent years the once-famed "All You Can Eat Seafood Bar" questions the reason for the closing.) Crab House and Shuckers were neighbors. A waterfront curse?

*Hungry for more food news? See "BizBuzz," page 16. Send me your tips and alerts: [restaurants@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:restaurants@biscaynetimes.com).*

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# Dining Guide

## Restaurant Listings

The Biscayne Corridor's most comprehensive restaurant guide. Total this month: 294.

Restaurant listings for the BT Dining Guide are written by Pamela Robin Brandt (restaurants@biscaynetimes.com). Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, but restaurants frequently change menus, chefs, and operating hours, so please call ahead to confirm information. Icons (\$\$\$) represent estimates for a typical meal without wine, tax, or tip. Hyphenated icons (\$-\$\$\$) indicate a significant range in prices between lunch and dinner menus, or among individual items on those menus.

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### MIAMI

#### Brickell / Downtown

**Aijo**  
1331 Brickell Bay Dr., 786-452-1637

Hidden within Jade condo, this sleek Japanese fusion restolounge (whose name means "love") is also a jewel. Food-loving Venezuelan owner Rene Buroz encourages innovation, and his chefs (including four from Zuma) respond with beautifully plated items as fun as they are flavorful. Don't miss the layered croquette (a sort of Asian croqueta: mouthwatering crispy rice, subtly smoked salmon, and creamy crab), Aijo kani (king crab legs with citrus foam clouds and rich emulsified butter dip), or creative cocktails from a mixologist who also juggles and plays with fire.

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270 Biscayne Boulevard Way  
305-424-5234

Not that the sleek interior of this seafood restaurant (named for fishing area 31, stretching from the Carolinas to South America) isn't a glamorous dining setting. But we'd eat outside. From the expansive terrace of the Epic condo and hotel on the Miami River, the views of Brickell's high-rises actually make Miami look like a real city. It's hard to decide whether the eats or drinks are the most impressive. The food is impeccably fresh regional fish, prepared in a clean Mediterranean-influenced style. The cocktails are genuinely creative. Luckily you don't have to choose one or the other. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

**Azul**  
500 Brickell Key Dr., 305-913-8254

Floor-to-ceiling windows showcase Biscayne Bay. But diners prefer ogling the raw-bar-fronted open kitchen, where globetrotting chef Joel Huff crafts imaginative, often multi-part dishes – some Asian-inspired (like oysters with fresh wasabi, hibiscus granita, and Asian pear), as one would expect from the Mandarin Oriental's top eatery. But most of Huff's dishes are strongly European-influenced, primarily by New Spanish cuisine. Elegant, playfully molecular gastronomy-accented almond gazpacho with foie gras "snow," or "eggs, bacon & toast" (suckling pig, tempura duck egg, truffled potato, and speck "air") tell the story. \$\$\$-\$

**Balans**  
901 S. Miami Ave., (Mary Brickell Village),  
305-534-9191

Open until 4:00 a.m. on weekends, this London import (Miami's second Balans) offers a sleeker setting than its perennially popular Lincoln Road progenitor, but the same simple yet sophisticated global menu. The indoor space can get mighty loud, but lounging on the dog-friendly outdoor terrace, over a rich croque monsieur (which comes with an alluringly sweet/sour citrus-dressed side salad), a lobster club on onion toast, some surprisingly solid Asian fusion items, and a cocktail is one of Miami's more relaxing experiences. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Bali Café**  
109 NE 2nd Ave., 305-358-5751

While Indonesian food isn't easy to find in Miami, downtown

has secret stashes – small joints catering to cruise-ship and construction workers. This cute, exotically decorated café has survived and thrived for good reason. The homey cooking is delicious, and the friendly family feel encourages even the timid of palate to try something new. Novices will want Indonesia's signature rijsttafel, a mix-and-match collection of small dishes and condiments to be heaped on rice. Note: bring cash. No plastic accepted here. \$\$\$

**Banana & Leaf**  
234 NE 3rd St., 786-431-5548

Ever get tempted by the convenience of supermarket sushi boxes, but feel uneasy about freshness and disgruntled about sparseness of fillings? In the grab-and-go containers here, raw fish glistens and makis like a plump snow crab roll have a satisfying seafood-to-rice ratio. If you'd rather, dishes on the larger custom menu arrive almost as fast. There is also limited, tasty Southeast Asian fare. Most unbelievable: Prices beat supermarket sushi by far. \$

**The Bar at Level 25 (Conrad Hotel)**

1395 Brickell Ave.,  
305-503-6500

On the Conrad's 25th floor, The Bar's picture-windowed space is not just a watering hole with panoramic views. At lunch it's an elegant sandwich bar; at night it's a raw bar (with pristine coldwater oysters) and (best) a tapas bar serving pintos. That's just the Basque word for tapas, but here there's nothing mere about the generously portioned small plates. They range from traditional items like cod fish equixada and saffron-sautéed Spanish artichokes to inventive inspirations like foie gras and goat cheese-stuffed empanadas. \$\$\$

**Bento Sushi & Chinese**  
801 Brickell Bay Dr., 305-603-8904

Hidden in the Four Ambassadors Towers, this tiny spot (which specializes in sushi plus Japanese small plates, but also serves limited Chinese and Thai-inspired dishes of the mix-and-match, pick-your-protein-then-preparation sort) has been mostly an insider's secret delivery joint for Brickell residents. But it's actually a pleasant place to relax outside, enjoying a bay view and budget bento box specials that include miso soup, ginger-dressed salad, California roll, and fresh orange sections. plus two mini-entrées (the nigiri assortment sushi and lacy-battered tempura especially recommended). Bubble tea, too! \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Biscayne Tavern**  
146 Biscayne Blvd., 305-307-8300

From restaurateur Jeffrey Chodorow, this contemporary tavern seems tailor-made for a newly urbanized neighborhood, inviting residents to hang from breakfast to late-night snack time, over updated comfort food that's globally inspired while adhering to the local/organic mantra. Among expected casual favorites (solid American burgers; Asianesque pork-belly sliders) highlights are items that chef Will Biscoe stamps with his own unique, unpretentiously inventive touches, from small plates (housemade potato chips with blue cheese fondue) to large (a long-bone short rib "chop" with truffle popover; South Florida bouillabaisse). More than 30 craft beers accompany. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Blue Martini**  
900 S. Miami Ave. #250, 305-981-2583

With a 41-martini menu (plus exotic lighting, late hours, dance floor, and live music most nights), this wildly popular place is more lounge than restaurant. Nonetheless food offerings are surprisingly ambitious, including substantial items like sliced steak with horseradish sauce, as well as shareable light bites – parmesan-topped spinach/artichoke dip, served hot with toasted pita; shrimp and blue crab dip (yes: crab, not faux "krab"); a seductive puff pastry-wrapped and honey-drizzled baked brie. Come at happy hour (4:00-8:00 p.m. daily) for bargain drink/snack specials, and lots of locals. \$\$

**Bonding**  
638 S. Miami Ave., 786-409-4794

From trend-spotting restaurateur Bond Trisansi (originator of Mr. Yum and 2B Asian Bistro), this small spot draws a hip crowd with its affordable menu of redesigned traditional Thai dishes, wildly imaginative sushi makis, and unique signature Asian fusion small plates. Highlights include taste-bud-tickling snapper carpaccio; an elegant nest of mee krob (sweet, crisp rice noodles); blessedly non-citrus-drenched tuna tataki, drizzled with spicy-sweet mayo and wasabi cream sauce; greed-inducing "bags of gold," deep-fried

### NEW THIS MONTH

#### MIAMI

##### BRICKELL/DOWNTOWN

**Fabien's**  
605 Brickell Key Dr., 305-364-5512

From off-shore, Brickell Key looks like a solid condo canyon, but it has secrets, including this eatery, whose refined but almost rural-feeling indoor/outdoor space, plus its traditional bistro menu, turn a business lunch into a short sojourn in the French countryside. The \$20, 20-minute, three-course "executive" menu, featuring steak/frites with herbed maitre d'hotel butter, is irresistible, but don't neglect harder-to-find classics like salmon Grenobloise with particularly lemony capered beurre blanc, Périgord salad (with duck "prosciutto" and foie gras), or for dessert, a flakey praline cream-filled Paris-Brest pastry. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

**Stanzione 87**  
87 SW 8th St., 305-606-7370

Though Neopolitan-style pizza isn't the rarity it was here a decade ago, this is Miami's only pizzeria certified authentic by Italy's Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana. This means following stringent rules regarding oven (wood-fired), baking time (90 seconds maximum, here closer to 50), tomatoes (imported San Marzano), olive oil (extra-virgin), even flour (tipo 00, for bubbly-light crusts). Toppings do exceed the three original choices served in 19th-century Naples, but pies like the Limone (fresh mozzarella, pecorino, lemons, arugula, EV00) prove some rules should be broken. \$\$

##### MIDTOWN / WYNWOOD / DESIGN DISTRICT

**Kouzina Greek Bistro**  
3535 NE 2nd Ave., 305-392-1825

This festive indoor/outdoor restolounge has native Greek owners – a chef, Alexia Apostolidi, also from Greece but with local critical kudos for her contemporary Greek creations at now-defunct Ariston; and a menu centering on mezés – shareable small plates, both classical (like tzatziki, hummus, and eggplant dips) and original (bacalao croquettes with garlic purée and roasted beet coulis; feta-filled phyllo "envelopes" drizzled with mountain thyme honey). Limited but luscious entrées, like honey-glazed

wonton beggar's purses with a shrimp/pork/mushroom/waterchestnut filling and tamarind sauce. \$\$

**Bon Fromage**  
500 Brickell Ave. #106,  
786-329-5632

Though independently owned instead of a chain cog, this cheese and wine café/shop is like a pint-size version of Midtown Miami's Cheese Course, right down to being officially self-service. But it is staffed by accommodating employees who, unofficially, do their best to double as servers for eat-in diners. The cheese (plus charcuterie) menu of garnished platters, salads, and crusty baguette sandwiches features numerous high-quality, imported favorites, but don't miss more unusual domestic treasures like Wisconsin bread, a cooked cheese that, like halloumi, doesn't melt but tantalizingly softens when heated. \$\$

**Brother Jimmy's BBQ**  
900 S. Miami Ave. #135, 786-360-3650

The South is supposed to be the source of barbecue. But Bro J evidently didn't hear about that. His signature North Carolina pork 'cue comes from NYC, where the first Brother Jimmy's opened more than 20 years ago. Miami's location is actually the first south of the Mason-Dixon line. But the slow-smoked pulled pork butt tastes righteous – no interfering glop, just hot sauce-spiked vinegar to balance the fat fattiness. There's other 'cue, too, including big (not baby back) ribs, and respectable brisket. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Bryan in the Kitchen**  
104 NE 2nd Ave., 305-371-7777

This quirky café-market's chef/owner is a former smoothie-swilling model who is now into fresh whole foods, and though his eclectic "green gourmet" menu does uniformly

pork belly with charred fennel and a polenta-like semolina "cake," also fuse chef-driven invention and evocatively simple traditional flavors. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Mercato**  
4141 NE 2nd Ave., 786-332-3772

Adjacent to Dena Marino's hot hangout MC Kitchen, the contemporary Italian chef's artisanal market and breakfast/lunch café is for diners wanting a quicker (but not fast-food) sit-down meal, or inventive take-out. Pressed for time? Try a pressed sandwich like Marino's Italian Cubano (porchetta, prosciutto cotto, Swiss, pickles, and Dijon mustard dressing, on ciabatta). Along with hot or cold sandwiches, there's a wide variety of homemade breakfast pastries, breads, cookies, and fresh-baked quiches, plus salads and a daily-changing soup. Market items include exotic jams, craft beers, and Marino's private label EV00. \$\$\$

**Soi Chinese Kitchen**  
645 NW 20th St., 305-482-0238

No chop suey. No kung pao anything, either. In fact, anything on Soi's menu that sounds like something from a normal Chinese eatery won't be: char sui ribs come with delicate corn pancakes, wonton soup is kafir lime broth with a mushroom/truffle-butter-stuffed ravioli, lo mein is housemade noodles with pork belly and sous vide 63-degree egg. Basically it's contemporary Chinese fine dining fare similar in creativity and quality ingredients to ultra-upscale Hakkasan's, but served by a tiny take-out joint (with a few patio tables and counter stools) at neighborhood prices. \$\$

### NORTH MIAMI BEACH

**Julio's Natural Foods Emporium**  
1602 NE Miami Gardens Dr., 305-947-4744

Vegetarians and vegans tired of settling for the one sad steamed vegetable entrée tacked onto most menus will be in pork-free pig heaven. Owner Julio Valderrama's healthy global (though mostly Mediterranean, Mexican, and New American) menu of not-so-small plates, salads, sandwiches/wraps, and organic grain-based platters is so immense you could literally eat for months without repeating – or indulging in poultry and fish dishes. Cooking isn't cutting-edge, but unusual spicing keeps things interesting. Especially recommended: a signature veg-and-feta-packed za'atar flatbread; also slightly sinful sweet potato with butter and cinnamon. \$\$\$

reflect his dedication to ecological consciousness, it otherwise could only be described as intensely personal. Offerings are an odd but appealing saint/sinner mix, ranging from healthy pasta/grain salads and homemade-from-scratch snacks (beef jerky, granola) to unique cupcakes featuring not-too-sweet adult flavors and irresistible sticky buns. If we had to choose just one category, we'd sin. But luckily, you can have it all. \$\$\$

**Café Bastille**  
248 SE 1st St., 786-425-3575

Breakfasting on a ham-egg-cheese crepe at this very French-feeling – and tasting – café is a most civilized way to start the day. Formerly breakfast and lunch only, the café is now open for dinner, too. And while the crepes (both savory and sweet) are tempting and varied enough to eat all day, dinner choices like homemade foie gras (with onion jam and Guerande salt), salmon with lentils and fennel salsa, or a very affordable skirt steak au poivre make it possible to resist. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Café Sambal**  
500 Brickell Key Dr., 305-913-8358

Though the Mandarin Oriental Hotel describes this space as its "casual hotel restaurant," many consider it a more spectacular dining setting than the upscale Azul, upstairs, owing to the option of dining outdoors on a covered terrace directly on the waterfront. The food is Asian-inspired, with a few Latin and Mediterranean accents. For the health-conscious, the menu includes low-cal choices. For hedonists there's a big selection of artisan sakes. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

**Cavas Wine Tasting Room**  
900 S. Miami Ave. #180, 305-372-8027

Like South Miami's predecessor (now closed), this Cavas is mainly an upscale, high-tech tasting lounge for the



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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

wine-curious. Patrons buy prepaid cards to sample ounce, half-glass, or full-glass portions from more than 50 self-service dispensing machines. But there's an extensive selection of tapas/pintox small plates, flatbread "pizzas," sandwiches, plus fully garnished charcuterie and cheese platters specially selected to pair well with vino. Additionally, more substantial dishes have been added, including a daily three-course lunch special and some tasty, bargain-priced soups (carrot cream with Gouda particularly recommended). \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Ceviche Piano

**140 SE 1st Ave., 305-577-4414**

Owners Martin and Charo Villacorta, a married chef/pastry chef team, think of this eatery as a relocation (in the same downtown plaza) and reinvention of their former "best kept secret" spot Martini 28. Most dramatic changes: upscaled size, and with its glamorous white piano, upgraded elegance. The menu has also been altered to be less of a global wildcard. Focus is now strongly on Peruvian cuisine, including a shrimp/calamari-smothered fish fillet with aji amarillo cream sauce. But no worries, old fans. Some of the old favorite dishes remain. \$\$

### Chophouse Miami

**300 S. Biscayne Blvd., 305-938-9000**

Formerly Manny's Steakhouse, Miami's Chophouse retains basically everything but the famed name (from the original Manny's in Minneapolis), and remains Miami's most intentionally masculine steakhouse. Here, ensconced in your black leather booth, everything is humongous: dry-aged choice-grade steaks like the Bludgeon of Beef (a boldly flavorful 40-ounce bone-in ribeye, described as "part meat, part weapon"); king crab legs that dwarf the plate; cocktail shrimp that could swallow the Loch Ness monster whole; two-fisted cocktails that would fell a T-Rex. Not for the frail. \$\$\$\$

### The Corner

**1035 N. Miami Ave., 305-961-7887**

With a Zuma alum in the kitchen, a Gigi alum crafting classic or creative cocktails, a warm pub feel, and hours extending from lunch to nearly breakfast the next morning, The Corner is transforming a desolate downtown corner into a neighborhood hangout. The nicely priced menu of sandwiches, salads, snacks, and sweets (the latter from Old Nom Nom's cookie queen Anthea Ponsetti) ranges from 100-percent homemade ice cream sandwiches to the Crazy Madame, France's elaborate Croque Madame (a béchamel sauce-topped grilled cheese/ham/fried egg sandwich) plus bacon and caramelized onion. \$-\$\$

### Crazy About You

**1155 Brickell Bay Dr. #101, 305-377-4442**

The owners, and budget-friendly formula, are the same here as at older Dolores, But You Can Call Me Lolita: Buy an entrée (all under \$20) from a sizable list of Mediterranean, Latin, American, or Asian-influenced choices (like Thai-marinated churrasco with crispy shoestring fries) and get an appetizer for free, including substantial stuff like a Chihuahua cheese casserole with chorizo and pesto. The difference: This place, housed in the former location of short-lived La Broche, has an even more upscale ambiance than Dolores – including a million-dollar water view. \$\$\$

### Cvi.che 105

**105 NE 3rd Ave., 305-577-3454**

Fusion food – a modern invention? Not in Peru, where native and Euro-Asian influences have mixed for more than a century. But chef Juan Chipoco gives the ceviches and tiraditos served at this hot spot his own unique spin. Specialties include flash-marinated raw seafood creations, such as *tiradito a la crema de rocoto* (sliced fish in citrus-spiked chili/cream sauce). But traditional fusion dishes like Chinese-Peruvian Chaufa fried rice (packed with jumbo shrimp, mussels, and calamari) are also fun, as well as surprisingly affordable. \$\$

### db Bistro Moderne

**255 Biscayne Blvd. Way, 305-421-8800**

Just two words, "Daniel Boulud," should be enough for foodies craving creative French/American comfort food to run, not walk, to this restaurant. Downtown's db is indeed an absentee celeb chef outpost, but on-site kitchen wizard Matthieu Godard flawlessly executes dishes ranging from the original db Bistro's signature foie gras/short rib/black truffle-stuffed burger to local market-driven dishes. Especially strong are seafood

preparations, whether sauced with a refined choron or lustily garnished with Provencal accompaniments like tender sea scallops with chickpea panisse. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### D-Dog House

**50 SW 10th St., 305-381-7770**

While it has become increasingly common to find servers at upscale restaurants utilizing computerized POS (point of service) systems to take orders, this high-tech hole-in-the-wall trumps them by replacing servers – and in-house entertainment, too – with iPads that accept not just food orders and credit cards but music requests. You can web surf or game, too, while waiting for your choice of the house specialty: super-sized hot dogs, most overloaded with internationally inspired toppings. To accompany, hand-cut fries are a must. And have a cocktail. There's a full liquor bar. \$-\$\$

### Dolores, But You Can Call Me Lolita

**1000 S. Miami Ave., 305-403-3103**

From the stylish setting in Miami's historic Firehouse No. 4, one would expect a mighty pricy meal. But entrées, which range from Nuevo Latino-style ginger/orange-glazed pork tenderloin to a platter of Kobe mini-burgers, all cost either \$18 or \$23. And the price includes an appetizer – no low-rent carpola, either, but treats like Serrano ham croquettes, a spinach/leek tart with Portobello mushroom sauce, or shrimp-topped eggplant timbales. The best seats are on the glam rooftop patio. \$\$\$

### Dominique Bistro-Club

**1451 S. Miami Ave., 305-371-8859**

At typical restorounges, the "resto" part often gets the short end of the stick. But not at this chic but friendly spot, where Gerardo Barrera, an alum of Paris's Le Cordon Bleu, plus his wife Dominique and her brother José Sigona, welcome diners with France's best-known bistro classics: coquilles St. Jacques (tender scallops in mushroom/white wine sauce); a precision-cooked entrecôte rib-eye with Bearnaise or complex Café de Paris butter; crème brûlée (from scratch) or macaron cookies (from heaven). No velvet ropes, and club music isn't cranked till 11:00 p.m. \$\$\$

### Edge, Steak & Bar

**1435 Brickell Ave., 305-358-3535**

Replacing the Four Seasons' formal fine dining spot Acqua, Edge offers a more kick-back casual welcoming vibe. And in its fare there's a particularly warm welcome for non-carnivores. Chef-driven seafood items (several inventive and unusually subtle ceviches and tartares; a layered construction of corvina encrusted in a jewel-bright green pesto crust, atop red piquillo sauce stripes and salad; lobster corn soup packed with sweet lobster meat; more) and a farm-to-table produce emphasis make this one steakhouse where those who don't eat beef have no beef. \$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$

### Elwoods Gastro Pub

**188 NE 3rd Ave., 305-358-5222**

Cordial English owners, classic rock music (sometimes live), and updated classic pub fare make this hangout a home. Made from scratch with artisan ingredients, traditional Brit bites like fish and chips can't be beat – thick pieces of crisply beer-battered moist cod, served with hand-cut fries and "mushy [mashed] peas," plus housemade tartar sauce and ketchup. All desserts are also made in-house, including a deliriously rich (but worth it) sticky date pudding with toffee sauce. Tie down your dental implants. They're in for a wild ride. \$\$

### Eos

**485 Brickell Ave. (Viceroy Hotel), 305-503-0373**

Originally opened by Michelin-starred "New Aegean" chef Michael Psilakis, Eos changed upon the chef's departure into a more familiar Mediterranean resort eatery, minus Greek-inspired innovations. Now inspiration comes mainly from Spain and Italy, with nods to Morocco and Latin America. Best bets include a tasting platter of Spanish cheeses and cured meats; a pistachio-garnished salad featuring Serrano ham, figs, and arugula; crispy parmesan risotto balls with prosciutto and smoked tomato dip; and olive/smoked paprika-rubbed roast chicken. At lunch burgers and upscale sandwiches are added. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Fado Irish Pub

**900 S. Miami Ave. #200, 786-924-0972**

Unlike most Miami "Irish" pubs, which serve mostly American bar food, rarely foraging past fish and chips or shepherd's pie, Fado (pronounced "f' doe") has a menu reflecting the pub grub

found today in Ireland, including solid standards. But most intriguing are dishes mixing classic and contemporary influences, particularly those featuring boxty, a grated/mashed potato pancake. Try corned beef rolls (boxty wraps, with creamy mustard sauce and cabbage slaw), or smoked salmon on mini-boxty "blini," with capers and horseradish sauce. There's a seasonal menu, too. \$\$

### First Hong Kong Café

**117 SE 2nd St., 305-808-6665**

Old Hong Kong saying: If it walks, swims, crawls, or flies, it's edible. And nowhere is this truer than in this historically international trade port's "cafés" – meaning fast-food restaurants. Typical menus present hundreds of items that are local interpretations of dishes from all China, and most other nations. So believe us: At this café, whose head chef is from HK, the Indian-style curries, sambal-spiked Indonesian chow fun, even the borscht (a tomato/beef, not beet-based version of the Russian soup) are as authentic as the kung pao whatever, and as tasty. \$\$

### Fratelli Milano

**213 SE 1st St., 305-373-2300**

Downtown isn't yet a 24/7 urban center, but it's experiencing a mini explosion of eateries open at night. That includes this family-owned ristorante, where even newcomers feel at home. At lunch it's almost impossible to resist panini, served on foccacia or crunchy ciabatta; even the vegetarian version bursts with complex and complementary flavors. During weekday dinners, try generous plates of risotto with shrimp and grilled asparagus; homemade pastas like seafood-packed fettuccine al scoglio; or delicate Vitello alla Milanese on arugula. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Garcia's Seafood Grille and Fish Market

**398 NW N. River Dr., 305-375-0765**

Run by a fishing family for a couple of generations, this venerable Florida fish shack is the real thing. No worries about the seafood's freshness; on their way to the dining deck overlooking the Miami River, diners can view the retail fish market. Best preparations are the simplest. When stone crabs are in season, Garcia's claws are as good as Joe's but considerably cheaper. The local fish sandwich is most popular – grouper, yellowtail snapper, or mahi mahi. \$-\$\$

### Giovana Caffè

**154 SE 1st Ave. 305-374-1024**

If the menu at this charming downtown hideaway contained only one item – pear and gorgonzola ravioli dressed, not drowned, in sage-spiced cream sauce – we'd be happy. But the café, formerly lunch-only but now serving weekday dinners, is also justly famed for meal-size salads like grilled skirt steak atop sweetly balsamic-dressed spinach (with spinach, tomatoes, bacon, hard-boiled eggs, blue cheese, and almonds), or an especially lavish chicken salad with pine nuts, golden raisins, apples, and basil, an Italian twist. \$\$

### Grimpa Steakhouse

**901 Brickell Plaza, 305-455-4757**

This expansive indoor/outdoor Brazilian eatery is sleekly contemporary, but no worries. The classic sword-wielding gauchos are here, serving a mind-reeling assortment of skewered beef, chicken, lamb, pork, sausages, and fish. And included in the price (dinner \$47, lunch \$34) is the traditional belly-busting buffet of hot and cold prepared foods, salad, cold cuts, and cheeses. A pleasant, nontraditional surprise: unusual sauces like sweet/tart passion fruit or mint, tomato-based BBQ, and mango chutney, along with the ubiquitous chimichurri. \$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$

### Half Moon Empanadas

**192 SE 1st Ave., 305-379-2525**

As with South Beach's original Half Moon, you can get wraps or salads. But it's this snacker's unique take on Argentine-style empanadas that makes it seem a natural for national franchising. The soft-crust, doughy crescents – baked, not fried, so relatively guilt-free – are amply stuffed with fillings both classic (beef and chicken, either mild or spicy) and creative: the bacon cheeseburger, the pancetta/mozzarella/plum-filled Americana, and several vegetarian options. At just over two bucks apiece, they're a money-saving moveable feast. \$

### Hawa Jade

**1331 Brickell Bay Dr., 305-905-5523**

When thinking "fusion" cuisines, Japanese and Lebanese

don't instantly spring to mind. But taking the medieval Spice Route connection as inspiration, the Hawa family makes the mix work at both its original Coral Gables Hawa and this new location in the Jade Residences. Golden Pockets (tofu crêpes encasing macadamias, avocados, and tuna, crab, shrimp, or Kobe-style beef) are musts. Plus there are unique combos containing makis plus substantial salads, like crunchy tuna enoki rolls with falafel salad – not the usual green garnish. Housemade desserts with a French twist are also a pleasant surprise. \$\$

### Hibachi Grill

**45 NE 3rd Ave., 305-374-2223**

Imagine a mini-express Benihana. This place specializes in teppanyaki cuisine – minus the thrilling (or terrifying) tableside knife theatrics, true, but the one-plate meals of seasoned steak slices, chicken, shrimp, or salmon plus dipping sauces, fried rice, and an onion/zucchini mix come at bargain prices. There are also hefty soups or Japanese, Thai, and Singapore-style noodle and rice bowls loaded with veggies and choice of protein (including tofu). The limited sides are Japanese (shumai, plump chicken gyoza) and Chinese (various egg rolls). Fancy? No, but satisfying. \$-\$\$

### The Hoxton

**1111 SW 1st Ave., 786-691-2730**

Though inland (and reportedly inspired by old England), this urban beach bar/grill has the relaxing, refined-rustic ambiance of a classic New England hangout, and upscaled "down shore" food to match: Maine lobster rolls, on brioche rather than hot dog rolls; a luxe take on Québécoise poutine (from-scratch fries with Vermont cheddar and duck confit gravy); an especially lavish clam bake. Also appealingly different from the Miami norm: frequent live bands of many musical genres in the comfortable lounge area, plus almost spookily competent service. \$\$\$

### Il Gabbiano

**335 S. Biscayne Blvd., 305-373-0063**

Its location at the mouth of the Miami River makes this ultra-upscale Italian spot (especially the outdoor terrace) the perfect power lunch/business dinner alternative to steakhouses. And the culinary experience goes way beyond the typical meat market, thanks in part to the flood of freebies that's a trademark of Manhattan's Il Mulino, originally run by Il Gabbiano's owners. The rest of the food? Pricy, but portions are mammoth. And the champagne-cream-sauced housemade ravioli with black truffles? Worth every penny. \$\$\$\$

### Jamon Iberico Pata Negra Restaurant

**10 SW South River Dr., 305-324-1111**

From the outside, you know you're walking into the ground floor of a new condo building. But once inside the charmingly rustic room, you'd swear you're in Spain. Obviously Spain's famous cured hams are a specialty, as are other pork products on the weekly changing menu, from a roast suckling pig entrée to a fried chorizo and chickpea tapa. But seafood is also terrific. Don't miss bacalao-filled piquillo peppers, or two of Miami's best rice dishes: seafood paella and arroz negro (with squid and its ink). \$-\$\$\$

### Kork Wine & Cheese Bar

**2 S. Miami Ave., 305-377-8899**

From the owner of Transit Lounge, a hip hangout long before the downtown/Brickell revival, this more upscale-cool venue is worth checking out for its almost medieval dimly lit décor alone, including a subterranean wine cellar/party room, formerly a WW II-era bomb shelter. Comestibles are limited to wine and cheese plus accompaniments. Both are available to go. Kork is as much market as lounge. But with a stock of roughly 5000 bottles, and a selection of roughly two dozen perfectly ripe artisanal cheeses – curated by a cheese sommelier who'll create perfect pairings – who needs more? \$\$

### Largo Bar & Grill

**401 Biscayne Blvd., 305-374-9706**

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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

### La Loggia Ristorante and Lounge

68 W. Flagler St., 305-373-4800

This luxuriantly neo-classical yet warm Italian restaurant was unquestionably a pioneer in revitalizing downtown. With alternatives like amaretto-tinged pumpkin agnolotti in sage butter sauce and cilantro-spiced white bean/vegetable salad dressed with truffle oil, proprietors Jennifer Porciello and Horatio Oliveira continue to draw a lunch crowd that returns for dinner, or perhaps just stays on during the afternoon, fueled by the Lawyer's Liquid Lunch, a vodka martini spiked with sweetened espresso. \$\$\$

### La Moon

144 SW 8th St., 305-860-6209

At four in the morning, nothing quells the munchies like a Crazy Burger, a Colombian take on a trucker's burger: beef patty, bacon, ham, mozzarella, lettuce, tomato, and a fried egg, with an arepa corn pancake "bun." While this tiny place's late hours (till 6:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday) are surprising, the daytime menu is more so. In addition to Colombian classics, there's a salad Niçoise with grilled fresh tuna, seared salmon with mango salsa, and other yuppie favorites. \$\$\$

### La Provence

1064 Brickell Ave. 786-425-9003

Great baguettes in the bread basket, many believe, indicate a great meal to come. But when Miami's encounter such bread – crackling crust outside; moist, aromatic, aerated interior – it's likely not from a restaurant's own kitchen, but from La Provence. Buttery croissants and party-perfect pastries are legend too. Not so familiar is the bakery's café component, whose sandwich/salad menu reflects local eclectic tastes. But French items like pan bagnats (essentially salade Niçoise on artisan bread) will truly transport diners to co-owner David Thau's Provençal homeland. \$\$

### La Sandwicherie

34 SW 8th St., 305-374-9852

This second location of the open-air diner that is South Beach's favorite après-club eatery (since 1988) closes earlier (midnight Sunday-Thursday, 5:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday), but the smoothies, salads, and superb Parisian sandwiches are the same: ultra-crusty baguette stuffed with evocative charcuterie and cheeses (saucisson sec, country pâté, camembert, etc.) and choice of salad veggies plus salty/tart cornichons and Sandwicherie's incomparable Dijon mustard vinaigrette. Additionally the larger branch has an interior, with a kitchen enabling hot foods (quiches and croques), plus A/C. \$\$\$

### Le Boudoir Brickell

188 SE 12th Terr., 305-372-233

At this French bakery/café, mornings start seriously, with choices ranging from quality cheese, charcuterie/pâté, or smoked salmon platters to chic Continental and complete American breakfasts. At lunch, generously salad-garnished, open-faced tartines are irresistible. But sophisticated salads and homemade soups make the choice tough. And do not skip dessert. Superb sweets include rich almond/fresh raspberry or properly tangy lemon tarts, traditional Madeleines, airy layered mousses, and addictive mini-macaron sandwich cookies with daily-changing fillings. \$\$\$

### Lime Fresh Mexican Grill

1 W. Flagler St., 305-789-9929

Like its Midtown and North Miami Beach siblings, this Lime Fresh serves up carefully crafted Tex-Mex food. The concept is "fast casual" rather than fast food – meaning nice enough for a night out. It also means ingredients are always fresh. Seafood tacos are about as exotic as the menu gets, but the mahi mahi for fish tacos comes from a local supplier, and salsas are housemade daily. Niceties include low-carb tortillas and many Mexican beers. \$

### Little Lotus

25 N. Miami Ave. #107, 305-533-2700

Secreted inside the International Jewelry Exchange, this eatery (owned by stealth super-fondle Sari Maharani – paralegal by day, restaurateur by night) is tough to find but seems destined to become one of our town's toughest tables to book. Two talented chefs, whose credits include Morimoto (NYC) and hometown fave Yakko-san, create Japanese, Indonesian, and fusion small plates that look remarkably artful and taste like they're about ready to take on Iron Chef Morimoto himself. Sourcing, often with multiple but balanced portions, is especially noteworthy. The prices? A steal. \$\$\$

### Machiya

3252 NE 1st Ave. #116, 786-507-5025

Originally called Machiya Ramen Noodle House, this eatery changed its name – and really, the place is not so much a ramen joint as

a contemporary izakaya (lounge featuring Japanese hot and cold small plates plus sushi), with a few added ramen bowls. Most of the menu is a mix of today's popular favorites, like "Kobe" sliders, and unique inventions. Wildest: wasabi-spiced tuna pizza. Our faves: fatty salmon makis (lightly seared salmon belly with shrimp tempura, asparagus, and yuzu sauce); rich miso-braised short ribs; steam buns with rock shrimp and spicy aioli.

### Medialunas Calentitas

919 Brickell Ave., 305-517-3303

At this first U.S. location of a Uruguayan chain, the signature specialty's crescent-like shape says "croissant." But medialunas don't have croissants' puff-pastry flakiness; they're more substantial buttery breakfast rolls. And either simply syrup-glazed or stuffed (with ham and cheese, dulce de leche, more), they make a terrific Latin comfort-food breakfast or snack on the run. The same is true for equally bargain-priced empanadas (three varieties with distinctive fillings from Uruguay, Argentina, or Mexico) and tiny but tasty migas sandwiches like the elaborate Olympic: ham, cheese, lettuce, tomato, peppers, eggs, olives. \$

### Miami Art Café

364 SE 1st St., 305-374-5117

For businessfolk on the go, this breakfast/lunch-only French café serves up evocative baguette sandwiches (like camembert) loaded, if you like, with greens, olives, and more. For those with time to sit, we'd recommend the savory crêpes, garnished with perfectly dressed salad, or sweet crêpe like the Bonne Maman (whose sugar/salted butter stuffing brings Brittany to downtown). And quiches are nicely custardy. But there are surprises here, too, including just a few full entrées, with correctly made traditional sauces one wouldn't expect at a luncheonette – except, perhaps, in Paris. \$\$\$

### Miami's Finest Caribbean Restaurant

236 NE 1st Ave., 305-381-9254

Originally from Jamaica, proprietor Miss Pat has been serving her traditional homemade island specialties to downtown office workers and college students since the early 1990s. Most popular item here might be the weekday lunch special of jerk chicken with festival (sweet-fried cornmeal bread patties), but even vegetarians are well served with dishes like a tofu, carrot, and chayote curry. All entrées come with rice and peas, fried plantains, and salad, so no one leaves hungry. \$

### Mint Leaf

1063 SE 1st Ave., 305-358-5050

Part of London's famous Woodlands Group, this stylish spot, like the Coral Gables parent, serves the sort of upscale Indian food rarely found outside Great Britain or India. More interestingly, the menu includes not just the familiar northern Indian "Mughlai" fare served in most of America's Indian restaurants, but refined versions of south India's scrum pitious street food. We've happily assembled whole meals of the vegetarian chaat (snacks) alone. And dosai (lacy rice/lentil crepes rolled around fillings ranging from traditional onion/potato to lamb masala or spicy chicken) are so addictive they oughta be illegal. \$\$\$

### Miss Yip Chinese Café

900 Biscayne Blvd., 305-358-0088

Fans of the South Beach original will find the décor different. Most notably, there's an outdoor lounge, and more generally a nightclub atmosphere. But the menu of Hong Kong-style Chinese food, prepared by imported Chinese cooks, is familiar. Simple yet sophisticated Cantonese seafood dishes rock (try the lightly battered salt-and-pepper shrimp), as does orange peel chicken, spicy/tangy rather than overly sweet. And a single two-course Peking duck (skin in crepes, stir-fried meat and veggies with lettuce cups) makes mouthwatering finger food, shared among friends. \$\$\$

### Momi Ramen

5 SW 11th St., 786-391-2392

Banish all thoughts of packaged instant "ramen." Perfectionist chef/owner Jeffrey Chen (who cooked for more than a decade in Japan), changes his mostly ramen-only menu often, but constants are irresistibly chewy handmade noodles; soups based on creamy, intensely porky tonkotsu broth (made from marrow bones simmered all day); meats like pork belly and oxtail; and authentic toppings including marinated soft-cooked eggs, pickled greens, more. Other pluses: It's open 24/7, and the ramen ranks with the USA's best. Minuses: It's cash only, and the ramen might be the USA's most expensive. \$\$\$

### MPP Brickell

141 SW 7th St., 305-400-4610

Tasty Peruvian eateries aren't rare in Miami. Peruvian fine-dining restaurants are. In the tastefully toned-down but still glam space formerly housing Andú, this second location of Lima's popular Mi Propriedad Privada specializes in familiar flavors presented with seriously upscaled preparations, plating, and prices. But many ceviches, tiraditos, and starters (like especially artful layered/molded mashed potato/seafood causas, or clever panko-breaded fusion "causa makis") come in trios for taste-testing. And ceviche lovers score on Tuesdays, when all-you-can-eat costs the same as a trio. \$\$\$

### My Ceviche

1250 S. Miami Ave., 305-960-7825

When three-time James Beard "Rising Star Chef" nominee Sam Gorenstein opened the original My Ceviche in SoBe, in 2012, it garnered national media attention despite being a tiny take-away joint. Arguably, our newer indoor/outdoor Brickell location is better. Same menu, featuring local fish prepared onsite, and superb sauces including a kicky roast-ed jalapeño/lime mayo), but this time with seats! What to eat? Ceviches, nachos. But grilled or raw fish/seafood tacos and burritos, in fresh tortillas, might be even more tempting. Pristine stone-crab claws from co-owner Roger Duarte's George Stone Crab add to the choices. \$\$

### Naoe

661 Brickell Key Dr., 305-947-6263

Chances are you've never had anything like the \$85 prix-fixe Japanese dinners at chef Kevin Cory's tiny but nationally acclaimed oasis, transplanted from its original Sunny Isles space with its supreme serenity intact. By reservation only, in two dinner seatings of just eight people each, and omakase (chef's choice) only, meals include a seasonal soup, a four-course bento box, eight pieces of sushi, and three desserts. Cory personally does everything for you, even applying the perfect amount of housemade artisan soy sauce mix and fresh-grated wasabi to each mind-reelingly fresh nigiri. Few eating experiences on earth are more luxurious. \$\$\$

### neMesis Urban Bistro

1035 N. Miami Ave., 305-415-9911

Truly original restaurants are hard to find here, and harder to describe in standard sound bites. But they often are the attention-grabbing people-magnets that spark revivals of iffy neighborhoods. That's our prediction for this quirkily decorated bistro, where the kitchen is helmed by Top Chef contestant Michal Edelstein. The intensely personal menu of creative dishes inspired by her global travels (plus her fascination with unfamiliar ingredients) changes constantly, but scrumptious signatures include South African smoked veal bobotie, and Peruvian pinoli pancakes with housemade chicken/apple sausage, hibiscus syrup, and maple granules. \$\$\$

### Novocento

1414 Brickell Ave., 305-403-0900

For those who think "Argentine cuisine" is a synonym for "beef and more beef," this popular eatery's wide range of more cosmopolitan contemporary Argentine fare will be a revelation. Classic parrilla-grilled steaks are here for traditionalists, but the menu is dominated by creative Nuevo Latino items like a new-style ceviche de chernia (lightly lime-marinated grouper with jalapeño, basil, and the refreshing sweet counterpoint of watermelon), or crab ravioli with creamy saffron sauce. Especially notable are the entrée salads. \$\$\$

### Oceanaire Seafood Room

900 S. Miami Ave., 305-372-8862

With a dozen branches nationwide, Oceanaire may seem more All-American seafood empire than Florida fish shack, but menus vary significantly according to regional tastes and fish. Here in Miami, chef Sean Bernal supplements signature starters like lump crab cakes with his own lightly marinated, Peruvian-style grouper ceviche. The daily-changing, 15-20 specimen seafood selection includes local fish seldom seen on local menus: pompano, parrot fish, amberjack. But even flown-in fish (and the raw bar's cold-water oysters) are ultra-fresh. \$\$\$

### OTC

1250 S. Miami Ave. 305-374-4612

Over-the-counter service usually connotes the classic fast food "slider" experience: both greaseburgers and patrons are in and out quickly. At this casually cool gastropub, the

counter ordering system encourages the opposite feel, of comfie congeniality; it invites hanging out, just without the fuss of formal dining out – or the expense. Most plates are \$10 or under. Ingredient-driven dishes cover today's favorite food groups (various mac-and-cheeses, variously topped/seasoned fries, and more) with some unusual twists, like a scrumptiously lardon-laden frisée/goat cheese salad brightened by fresh peaches. Even the condiments are housemade. \$\$

### Ozzi Sushi

200 SE 1st St., 786-704-8003

Since its 1958 invention, conveyor-belt sushi has been the most fun form of Japanese fast food, but problematic. Who knew how long plates had been circulating on the sushi-go-round? Happily, this sushi-boat spot avoids sanitation issues with clear plastic covers, and as for freshness, low prices ensure a steady stream of diners grabbing makis, nigiri, and more as they float by. Highlights include glistening ikura (salmon roe) in a thin-sliced cucumber cup, a sweet-sauced mango/guava/crab roll, and a festively frosted strawberry Nutella dessert maki. \$\$\$

### Pasha's

1414 Brickell Ave., 305-416-5116

The original branch on Lincoln Road was instantly popular, and the same healthy Middle Eastern fast food is served at several newer outlets. The prices are low enough that you might suspect Pasha's was a tax write-off rather than a Harvard Business School project, which it was by founders Antonio Ellek and Nicolas Cortes. Dishes range from falafel and gyros to more unusual items like muhammara (tangy walnut spread) and silky labneh yogurt cheese. Everything from pitas to lemonade is made fresh, from scratch, daily. \$\$\$

### Pega Grill

15 E. Flagler St., 305-808-6666

From Thanasis Barlos, a Greek native who formerly owned North Beach's Ariston, this small spot is more casually contemporary and less ethnic-kitschy in ambiance, but serves equally authentic, full-flavored Greek food. Mixed lamb/beef gyros (chicken is also an option), topped with tangy yogurt sauce and wrapped, with greens and tomatoes, in fat warm pita bread, are specialties. But even more irresistible is the taramasalata (particularly velvety and light carp roe dip), available alone or on an olive/pita-garnished mixed meze platter. \$\$

### Perricone's

15 SE 10th St., 305-374-9449

Housed in a Revolutionary-era barn (moved from Vermont), this market/café was one of the Brickell area's first verified amenities. At lunch chicken salad is a favorite; dinner's strong suit is the pasta list, ranging from Grandma Jennie's old-fashioned lasagna to chichi flocchi purses filled with fresh pear and gorgonzola. And Sunday's \$15.95 brunch buffet (\$9.95 for kids) – featuring an omelet station, waffles, smoked salmon and bagels, salads, and more – remains one of our town's most civilized all-you-can-eat deals. \$\$

### Pieducks

1451 S. Miami Ave., 305-808-7888

If you can overlook a name as unenlightening as most in-jokes (it evidently refers to a favorite character of owner Claudio Nunes' kids – we assume the Pokemon Psyduck), you'll experience pretty perfect pizza. Sadly, not all brick ovens turn out perfectly char-blistered crusts, crisp outside and airy/chewy inside, but that's what you'll consistently find here and a newer take-out/delivery-only Midtown branch. And unlike many artisan pizzerias, Pieducks doesn't get cheesy with cheese quantity (though we like that extra cheese is an option). Elaborate salads complement the menu. \$\$

### Pier 94

94 SE 1st St., 305-379-5652

Tucked into "The Village," a collection of courtyard eateries far from any waterfront, this ceviche bar specializes in fresh seafood dishes from chef/owner Alex Del Corral's native Peru, but also features famous Peruvian meat and poultry dishes (including a refined aji de gallina, chicken in aji pepper-spiced cream sauce). Emphasis is particularly strong on Peru's penchant for fusion food, including traditional Chifa (Chinese-Peruvian) rice or noodle stir-fries. But the chef also fuses classic and creative influences. Try contemporary causas, combining Peru's favorite starch, potatoes, with unique new sauces. \$\$

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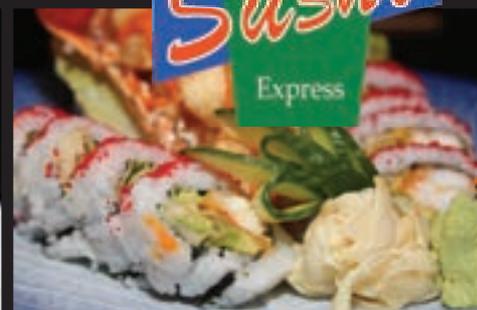
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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

### Thea Pizzeria-Café

1951 NW 7th Ave., 305-777-3777

Just over the border from artsy Wynwood, this ultra-cool café (whose interior features a 30-foot Italian glass floral mosaic) isn't what you'd expect to find inside one of the medical/lab buildings in Miami's sterile "Health District." But the owner is Thea Goldman, former founding partner of Wynwood's pioneering restolounge Joey's, which explains both the stylishness and the menu, highlighted by imaginative wood-oven designer pizzas, plus artisan charcuterie/cheese platters, creative salads, and housemade salted caramel gelato. Not your typical hospital food. Call ahead regarding dinner. At this writing, it's being served Fridays only. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Pizzarium

69 E. Flagler St., 305-381-6025

Roman-style rectangular pizzas, served in square slices, have been available in the Miami area since the mid-1990s. But the familiar squares and Pizzarium's are similar only in shape. Main difference: dough, here allowed to rise for four days. The resulting crusts are astonishingly airy, as authentic Roman slices, intended as light street snacks, should be. Toppings, a rotating selection of nearly 30 combinations, are highlighted by quality imported ingredients – not to mention a healthy imagination, as the zucca gialla attests: pumpkin cream, pancetta, smoked scamorza cheese. \$

### Porketta

43 NE 3rd Ave., 305-372-0034

Warm, juicy, served with succulent pieces of crisp crackling, herb-stuffed Italian porchetta (pronounced "porketta") roast, at its best, is hard to find even in much of Italy except during festivals. But every day is a festival here, where the real thing (not the dry deli-style pork roll slices that often pass for porchetta) is featured on a plate with broccoli rabe and cannellinis; in the hefty Bombardino sandwich; or in three mini-sandwiches, convenient for sampling the place's three sauces. Several salads and carpaccios placate porkophobes. \$\$-\$\$

### Prelude

Adrienne Arsh Center

1300 Biscayne Blvd., 305-949-6722

Though the opening of Barton G.'s elegant performing arts center eatery did feature a live giraffe, the food's actually more grown-up than at his original SoBe spot. The concept is prix fixe: Any three courses on the menu (meaning three entrées if you want) for \$39. Highlights include silky, tarragon-inflected corn/bacon chowder, beautifully plated beef carpaccio with horseradish/mustard and shallot olive oil dipping sauces; and over-the-top playhouse desserts, one with a luscious crème fraiche ice cream pop. \$\$\$

### Raja's Indian Cuisine

33 NE 2nd Ave., 305-539-9551

Despite its small size and décor best described as "none," this place is an institution thanks to south Indian specialties rarely found in Miami's basically north Indian restaurants. The steam-tabled curries are fine (and nicely priced), but be sure to try the custom-made dosai (lacy rice crepes with a variety of savory fillings) and uttapam, thicker pancakes, layered with onions and chilis, both served with sambar and chutney. \$\$

### The River Oyster Bar

650 S. Miami Ave., 305-530-1915

This casually cool jewel is a full-service seafood spot, as evidenced by tempting menu selections like soft-shell crabs with grilled vegetables, corn relish, and remoulade. There are even a few dishes to please meat-and-potatoes diners, like short ribs with macaroni and cheese. But oyster fans will find it difficult to resist stuffing themselves silly on the unusually large selection, especially since oysters are served both raw and cooked – fire-roasted with sofrito butter, chorizo, and manchego. There's also a thoughtful wine list and numerous artisan beers on tap. \$\$\$

### Rosa Mexicano

900 S. Miami Ave., 786-425-1001

This expansive indoor/outdoor space offers a dining experience that's haute in everything but price. Few entrées top \$20. The décor is both date-worthy and family-friendly – festive but not kitschy. And nonsophisticates needn't fear; though nachos aren't available, there is nothing scary about zarape de pato (roast duck between freshly made, soft corn tortillas, topped with yellow-and-habanero-pepper cream sauce), or Rosa's signature guacamole en molcajete, made tableside. A few pomegranate margaritas ensure no worries. \$\$\$

### Scalina

315 S. Biscayne Blvd., 305-789-9933

Comparisons between this new Tom Billante venture and the other (slightly pricier) Italian eatery in the same building are inevitable, especially considering similarities like key personnel from NYC's Il Mulino, Mulino-style abundant free appetizers, and a power-dining crowd. But why focus on competitive nonsense when you can relax on the river-view terrace enjoying chef Enrico Giraldo's specialties, including an elaborate take on Venice's famed fegato (calf's liver and onions), upscaled with Lucanica sausage and a balsamic reduction. Or maybe an even more evocative Roman ice cream tartufo? Mangia! \$\$\$

### Soya & Pomodoro

120 NE 1st St., 305-381-9511

Life is complicated. Food should be simple. That's owner Armando Alfano's philosophy, which is stated above the entry to his atmospheric downtown eatery. And since it's also the formula for the truest traditional Italian food (Alfano hails from Pompeii), it's fitting that the menu is dominated by authentically straightforward yet sophisticated Italian entrées. There are salads and sandwiches, too. The most enjoyable place to dine is the secret, open-air courtyard. Alfano serves dinner on Thursdays only to accompany local musicians and artists. \$-\$\$

### Sparky's Roadside Restaurant & Bar

204 NE 1st St., 305-377-2877

This cowboy-cute eatery's chefs/owners (one CIA-trained, both BBQ fanatics nicknamed Sparky) eschew regional purism, instead utilizing a hickory/apple-wood-stoked rotisserie smoker to turn out their personalized style of slow-cooked, complexly dry-rub fusion: ribs, chopped pork, brisket, and chicken. Diners can customize their orders with mix-and-match housemade sauces: sweet/tangy tomato-based, Carolinas-inspired vinegar/mustard, pan-Asian hoisin with lemongrass and ginger, tropical guava/habanero. Authenticity aside, the quality of the food is as good as much higher-priced barbecue outfits. \$-\$\$

### Sushi Maki

1000 S. Miami Ave., 305-415-9779

Fans of the popular parent Sushi Maki in the Gables will find many familiar favorites on this Brickell branch's menu. But the must-haves are some inventive new dishes introduced to honor the eatery's tenth anniversary – and Miami multiculturalism: "sushi tacos" (fried gyoza skins with fusion fillings like raw salmon, miso, chili-garlic sauce, and sour cream), three tasty flash-marinated Asian/Latin tiraditos; addictive rock shrimp tempura with creamy/spicy dip. Also irresistible: four festive new sake cocktails. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### SuViche

49 SW 11th St., 305-960-7097

This small Japanese-Peruvian place serves food influenced by each nation distinctly, plus intriguing fusion items with added Caribbean touches. Cooked entrées, all Peruvian, include an elegant aji de gallina (walnut-garnished chicken and potatoes in peppery cream sauce). But the emphasis is on contemporary ceviches/tiraditos (those with velvety aji amarillo chili sauce particularly), plus huge exotic sushi rolls, which get pretty wild. When was the last time you encountered a tempura-battered tuna, avocado, and scallion maki topped with Peru's traditional potato garnish, huancaína cheese sauce? \$\$

### Temaris

1250 S. Miami Ave., 305-836-2747

In Japan, temaris are ornamented hand balls, used since the Seventh Century for sport and as good luck folk-art objects. At this Japanese/Latin hot spot, temaris are reinterpreted, both playfully and artfully, as beautiful, bite-size sushi balls (each about half the size of normal nigiri): vinegary rice topped with sliced raw fish or beef, plus nipples constructed from several of the eatery's dozen-and-a-half sauces. Fancier mini-balls feature fusion combinations like spicy tuna, almonds, and tobiko, or substitute crispy rice. Normal-size makis, small plates, and desserts are also fun. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Tobacco Road

626 S. Miami Ave., 305-374-1198

Prohibition-era speakeasy (reputedly a fave of Al Capone), gay bar, strip club. Previously all these, this gritty spot has been best known since 1982 as a venue for live music, primarily blues. But it also offers food from lunchtime to late night (on weekends till 4:00 a.m.). The kitchen is especially known for its chili, budget-priced steaks, and burgers. There's also

surprisingly elegant fare, though, like a Norwegian salmon club with lemon aioli. A meat-smoker in back turns out tasty ribs. \$\$

### Top Burger

109 NE 1st St., 305-379-3100

Inside this "better burger" spot, décor is so charmingly 1950s retro you almost expect to find the Fonzie leaning on a jukebox. What you actually find: hand-formed, hormone-free, 100% Angus patties (or alternatives like veggie burgers, a lightly-breaded chicken Milanese, and all-beef hot dogs) on toasted buns, with fresh-cut French or sweet potato fries. Welcome surprises include an assertively spicy/tangy BBQ-like secret sauce; prices that, while not 1950s level, rival those at junkfood joints; and old-school service – the kind that comes with a smile. \$

### Toro Toro

100 Chopin Plaza, 305-372-4710

Back before Miami's business district had any "there" there, the InterContinental's original restaurant was an executive lunch/dinner destination mainly by default. This replacement, from restaurant empire-builder Richard Sandoval, brings downtown power dining into this decade. As the name suggests, you can go bullish with steakhouse fare, including an abbreviated (in variety, not quantity) "rodizio experience." But the place's strongest suit is its pan-Latin small plates – upscaled refinements of classic favorites: crisp corn arepas with short rib, guacamole, and crema fresca; fluffier cachapas pancakes with tomato jam; more. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Trapiche Room

1109 Brickell Ave., 305-329-3656

With multiple Marriott hotels in Brickell and downtown, one of them housing high-profile db Bistro, it's not surprising that this small, second-floor restaurant is something of a "best kept secret." But it deserves discovery. Chef Maria Tobar hasn't Daniel Boulud's fame, but she does have classic European-type technical skills, combined with contemporary creativity that turns even ultimately old-fashioned items, like a pork/cabbage strudel, into 21st century fine-dining fare. Both décor and service, similarly, are swaggy, not stuffy, and the room's intimacy makes it a romantic spot for special occasions. \$\$\$

### Tre Italian Bistro

270 E. Flagler St., 305-373-3303

"Bistro" actually sounds too Old World for this cool hangout, from the owners of downtown old-timer La Loggia, but "restolounge" sounds too glitzy. Think of it as a neighborhood "bistro-lounge." The food is mostly modernized Italian, with Latin and Asian accents: a prosciutto-and-fig pizza with Brazilian catupiry cheese; gnocchi served either as finger food (fried, with calamata olive/truffle aioli), or plated with orange-ginger sauce. But there are tomato-sauced meatballs with ri'gawt for Grandpa Vinnie, too. \$-\$\$\$

### Truluck's Seafood, Steak, and Crabhouse

777 Brickell Ave., 305-579-0035

Compared to other restaurants with such an upscale power-lunch/dinner setting, most prices are quite affordable here, especially if you stick to the Miami Spice-priced date-dinner menu, or happy hour, when seafood items like crab-cake "sliders" are half price. Most impressive, though, are seasonal stone crabs (from Truluck's own fisheries, and way less expensive than Joe's) and other seafood that, during several visits, never tasted less than impeccably fresh, plus that greatest of Miami restaurant rarities: informed and gracious service. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Tuyo

415 NE 2nd St., 305-237-3200

Atop the revolutionary Miami Culinary Institute, this upscale eatery, unlike the café downstairs, isn't student-run. Rather it's designed to showcase school ideals – including sustainability as well as definitive Miami cuisine. The changing menu, from a culinary Dream Team headed by "New World Cuisine" inventor/MCI instructor Norman Van Aken (plus former protégés Jeffrey Brana and Travis Starwalt), mixes citrus-inflected creamy conch chowder and other pioneering signatures with new inventions like mind-reelingly multidimensional oyster pan stew, or tartare of tuna and bursting ripe tomato topped with a delicate sous vide egg. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Wok Town

119 SE 1st Ave., 305-371-9993

Judging from the takeout window, the minimalist décor (with communal seating), and preponderance of American veggies on

the menu, this Asian fast-food eatery, owned by Shai Ben-Ami (a Miss Yip and Domo Japones veteran) May initially seem akin to those airport Oriental steam tables. Wrong. Custom-cooked by Chinese chefs, starters (like soy/garlic-coated edamame), salads, and have-it-your-way stir-fries, fried rice, or noodle bowls burst with bold, fresh flavor. The proof: a startlingly savory miso beef salad, with sesame/ginger/scallion dressing. Bubble tea, too! \$

### Zuma

270 Biscayne Blvd. Way, 305-577-0277

This Miami River restolounge has a London parent on San Pellegrino's list of the world's best restaurants, and a similar menu of world-class, Izakaya-style smallish plates (robata-grilled items, sushi, much more) meant for sharing over drinks. Suffice to say that it would take maybe a dozen visits to work your way through the voluminous menu, which offers ample temptations for vegetarians as well as carnivores. Our favorite is the melt-in-your-mouth pork belly with yuzu/mustard miso dip, but even the exquisitely-garnished tofu rocks. \$\$\$

## Midtown / Wynwood / Design District

### 3 Chefs Chinese Restaurant

1800 Biscayne Blvd. #105, 305-373-2688

Until this eatery opened in late 2010, the solid Chinese restaurants in this neighborhood could be counted on the fingers of no hands. So it's not surprising that most people concentrate on Chinese and Chinese/American fare. The real surprise is the remarkably tasty, budget-priced, Vietnamese fare. Try pho, 12 varieties of full-flavored beef/rice noodle soup (including our favorite, with well-done flank steak and flash-cooked eye round). All can be customized with sprouts and fresh herbs. Also impressive: Noodle combination plates with sautéed meats, salad, and spring rolls. \$\$

### B Sweet

20 NE 41st St., 305-918-4453

At this homey neighborhood jewel, located in a former apartment building, husband/wife team Tom Worhach and Karina Gimenez serve up warm welcomes and playfully inventive breakfast, lunch, and snack fare: bacon-wrapped egg and cheese cups; pressed Philly steak panini; an elegant yuzu-dressed smoked salmon, grapefruit, avocado, and arugula salad. But the must-eats are sweets, housemade by Worhach, formerly executive pastry chef at the Mansion at Turtle Creek and similar gourmet palaces. One bite of his decadent yet impressively light white-and-dark chocolate mousse cake will hook you for life. \$-\$\$

### Basani's

3221 NE 2nd Ave., 786-925-0911

Despite this tiny place's modern décor, the family-run ambiance and Italian-American comfort food evoke the neighborhood red-sauce joints that were our favored hangouts growing up in NJ's Sopranos territory. And low prices make it possible to hang out here frequently. Pizzas with hand-tossed crusts, not wood-oven but resembling honest bread, for less than fast food pizzeria prices? It's an offer you don't refuse. Don't refuse garlic rolls, either, or sinful zeppole (fried dough) for dessert. There's more complex fare, like chicken à la Francese, too. And they deliver. \$\$

### Bengal

2010 Biscayne Blvd., 305-403-1976

At this Indian eatery the décor is cool and contemporary: muted gray and earth-tone walls, tasteful burgundy banquettes. And the menu touts "Modern Indian Cuisine" to match the look. Classicists, however, needn't worry. America's favorite familiar north Indian flavors are here, though dishes are generally more mildly spiced and presented with modern flair. All meats are certified halal, Islam's version of kosher – which doesn't mean that observant orthodox Jews can eat here, but Muslims can. \$\$\$

### Best Friends

4770 Biscayne Blvd., 786-439-3999

On a restaurant-starved stretch of Biscayne Boulevard, this spot serves the same sort of simple but satisfying Italian fare (antipasti, soups, salads, pizzas) as its older sibling, South Miami's Blu Pizzeria, plus burgers. The thin-crust, pliable pizzas, though lacking burn blisters, are brick-oven cooked, as are "blues," unusual calzones (like the blu oceano, fatty filled with mozzarella, prosciutto crudo, arugula, and fresh tomatoes).

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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

Hefty half-pound burgers come similarly stuffed rather than topped. A sheltered patio and full bar make the place a pleasant neighborhood lounge, too. \$\$

### **Bin No. 18** 1800 Biscayne Blvd., 786-235-7575

At this wine bar/café, the décor is a stylish mix of contemporary (high loft ceilings) and Old World (tables made from wine barrels). Cuisine is similarly geared to the area's smart new residents: creative sandwiches and salads at lunch, tapas and larger internationally themed Spanish, Italian, or French charcuterie platters at night. Though the place is small and family-run friendly, chef Alfredo Patino offers sophisticated snacks like the figgiotto: arugula, gorgonzola dolce, caramelized onions, pine nuts, fresh figs, and prosciutto. Free parking behind the building. \$\$

### **Bloom** 2751 N. Miami Ave., 305-576-5443

Miami's most innovative art district is the perfect setting for this hip hangout, whose mad-genius menu proves that food is indeed one of the creative arts. Reinvented Latin/Asian street foods from chef Ricky Sauri (ex-Nobu) include spicy Spam-topped rice cakes; tuna tartare in seaweed "tacos"; a reina pepiada arepa, whose traditional mild chicken filling is replaced by shredded duck, avocado, tangy-sweet tamarind sauce, and Japanese mayo; an especially elegant Korean bibimbap; a vegan shitake-pumpkin tamale with nutty, cheesy natto sauce. For liquid art aficionados: cocktails like the eye-popping Tequila Beets (featuring roasted beet juice). \$\$\$

### **Buena Vista Bistro** 4582 NE 2nd Ave., 305-456-5909

If a neighborhood eatery like this one — which serves supremely satisfying bistro food — were within walking distance of every Miami resident, we'd be a helluva hip food town. Like true Parisian bistros, it's open continuously, every day, with prices so low that you can drop in anytime for authentic rilletes (a rustic pâté) with a crusty baguette, steak with from-scratch fries, salmon atop ratatouille, or many changing blackboard specials. Portions are plentiful. So is free parking. \$\$

### **Buena Vista Deli** 4590 NE 2nd Ave., 305-576-3945

At this casual café/bakery, co-owned by Buena Vista Bistro's Claude Postel, the day starts in authentic French fashion, with fresh breakfast breads, chocolate almond croissants, and other delights. At lunch cornichon-garnished baguette sandwiches (containing housemade pâtés, sinfully rich pork rilletes, superb salami, and other charcuterie classics) are irresistible, and a buttery-crust, custardy quiche plus perfectly dressed salad costs little more than a fast-food combo meal. As for Postel's homemade French sweets, if you grab the last Paris-Brest, a praline butter-cream-filled puff pastry, we may have to kill you. \$\$\$

### **Cafeina** 297 NW 23rd St., 305-438-0792

This elegantly comfortable multi-room indoor/outdoor venue is described as an "art gallery/lounge," and some do come just for cocktails like the hefty café con leche martinis. But don't overlook chef Guily Booth's 12-item menu of very tasty tapas. The signature item is a truly jumbo-lump crab cake with no discernible binder. At one South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Martha Stewart proclaimed it the best she'd ever had. Our own prime pick: melt-in-your-mouth ginger sea bass anticuchos, so buttery-rich we nearly passed out with pleasure. \$\$

### **Catch Grill & Bar** 1633 N. Bayshore Dr., 305-536-6414

A location within easy walking distance of the Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, in the extensively renovated Marriott Biscayne Bay, makes this casual-chic eatery, whose specialty is local and sustainable seafood, a great option for pre-show bites. Then again, enjoying lures like sweet-glazed crispy shrimp with friends on the outdoor, bayfront terrace is entertainment enough. It's worth calling to ask if the daily catch is a sustainable local that tastes like a cross between grouper and sea bass. Bonus: With validation, valet parking is free. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### **Cerviceria 100 Montaditos** 3252 NE 1st Ave. #104, 305-921-4373

Student budget prices, indeed. A first-grader's allowance would cover a meal at this first U.S. branch of a popular Spanish chain. The 100 mini sandwiches (on crusty, olive oil-drizzled baguettes) vary from \$1 to \$2.50, depending not on ingredient quality but complexity. A buck scores genuine Serrano ham, while top-ticket fillings add imported Iberico cheese, pulled pork, and tomato to the cured-ham slivers. Other options revolve around pâtés, smoked salmon, shrimp, and similar elegant stuff. There's cheap draft beer, too, plus nonsandwich snacks. \$\$

### **City Hall the Restaurant** 2004 Biscayne Blvd. 305-764-3130

After 30+ years spent guiding other owners' restaurants to success, Miami Spice program creator Steve Haas has opened his own expansive, two-floor place, on a stretch of Biscayne Boulevard that's suddenly looking fashionable. The vibe is a mix of power-dining destination and comfy neighborhood hangout, and chef Tom Azar (ex-Emeril's) has designed a varied menu to match. Highlights: an astonishingly thin/crunchy-crust pizza topped with duck confit, wild mushrooms, port wine syrup, and subtly truffled béchamel; crispy calamari (rings and legs) with light, lemony tomato emulsion; and tuna tartar that is refreshingly free of sesame oil. Big portions and a full bar to boot. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### **The Cheese Course** 3451 NE 1st Ave. 786-220-6681

Not so much a restaurant as an artisanal cheese shop with complimentary prepared foods, this place's self-service café

component nevertheless became an instant hit. Impeccable ingredients and inspired combinations make even the simplest salads and sandwiches unique — like bacon and egg, elevated by hand-crafted cream cheese, roasted red peppers, avocado, and chipotle Mayo. Cheese platters are exceptional, and customized for flavor preference from mild to bold, and accompanied by appropriate fruits, veggies, nuts, olives, prepared spreads, and breads. \$\$

### **Crumb on Parchment** 3930 NE 2nd Ave., 305-572-9444

Though located in a difficult spot (the Melin Building's central atrium, invisible from the street), Michelle Bernstein's bakery/café packs 'em in, partly due to Bernstein's mom Martha, who makes irresistible old-school cakes: German chocolate with walnuts, lemon curd with buttercream frosting, more. Lunch fare includes inspired sandwiches like seared rare tuna with spicy Asian pickles and kimchi aioli. And for morning people, the savory chicken sausage, melted cheddar, kale, and shallot sandwich on challah will convince you that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. \$\$\$

### **The Cypress Room** 3620 NE 2nd Ave., 305-520-5197

Deer and boar heads on wood-paneled walls juxtapose with crystal chandeliers at this tiny fourth restaurant in Michael Schwartz's burgeoning empire, evoking feelings of dining in a century-old millionaire's hunting lodge — in miniature. Many dishes are similarly fun fantasies of 1920s Florida fine dining, pairing yesteryear's rustic proteins (including wild game) and veggies with preparations that are ultimately refined interpretations of the past: antelope/wild mushroom gnocchi; "French onion soup" with a sort of gyuere tuile float instead of the usual gooey melt, served on a lacy doily. Don't miss the royal red shrimp, or Hedy Goldsmith's desserts. \$\$\$\$

### **Daily Melt** 3401 N. Miami Ave. #123, 305-573-0101

Masterminded by Chef Allen Susser, the concept is to bring diners the comfort of homemade grilled cheese — like mom's, if mom hadn't usually burned the bread and improperly melted the cheese. The Melt's custom grill press browns/melts sandwiches perfectly every time. Additionally, Susser tested numerous all-American cheeses (no imports or artisanal products) for gooey goodness. Mom probably also didn't create combinations like cheddar with green apples and Virginia ham, or allow a simple signature grilled American cheese to be dressed up with truffle butter. Accompaniments include roasted tomato soup, chopped salads, and sweet melts like s'mores. \$

### **The Daily Creative Food Co.** 2001 Biscayne Blvd., 305-573-4535

While the food formula of this contemporary café is familiar

— sandwiches, salads, soups, breakfast food, and pastries, plus coffee and fruit drinks — a creative concept differentiates the place. Signature sandwiches are named after national and local newspapers, including Biscayne Times, giving diners something to chat about. Sandwiches and salads can also be do-it-yourself projects, with an unusually wide choice of main ingredients, garnishes, breads, and condiments for the creatively minded. \$

### **El Bajareque** 278 NW 36th St., 305-576-5170

Dozens of little Latin American eateries, all looking almost identically iffy, line 36th Street. But this family-owned "bajareque" (shack) is one where you definitely want to stop for some of Miami's most tasty, and inexpensive, Puerto Rican home cooking, from mondongo (an allegedly hangover-curing soup) to mofongo, a plantain/chicharron mash with varied toppings plus garlicky mojo. Housemade snacks are irresistible, too, and great take-out party fare: pork-studded pasteles, similar to Cuban tamales but with a tuber rather than corn masa dough, or empanadas with savory shrimp stuffing. \$

### **Egg & Dart** 4029 N. Miami Ave., 786-431-1022

While co-owners Costa Grillas (from Maria's, a Coral Gables staple) and Niko Theodorou (whose family members have several Greek islands restaurants) describe their cuisine as "rustic Greek," there is surprising sophistication in some dishes: an especially delicate taramasalata (cod roe dip); precisely crisp-fried smelts (like a freshwater sardine); galactobourico, an often heavy and cloyingly vanilla-saturated dessert, here custardy and enlivened by orange flavor. Extensive lists of mezze (snacks) and creative cocktails make the expansive, invitingly decorated space ideal for large gatherings of friends who enjoy sharing. \$\$\$

### **Egyptian Pizza Kitchen** Shops at Midtown Miami

Buena Vista Avenue, 305-571-9050  
Pizza, pita — hey, they're both flatbreads. So while many pizzas do indeed, as this halal place's name suggests, have initially weird-seeming Middle Eastern toppings, it's really not surprising that the Giza (topped with marinated lamb, feta, olives, peppers, and pungently spiced cumin sauce) stands at least as well as Italian classics. Additionally the menu includes interesting Middle Eastern fare like foul, a hummus-like but lighter Egyptian dish of fava, tahini, garlic, lemon juice, and olive oil. A brick oven makes both pizzas and homemade pitas superior. \$\$

### **The Embassy** 4600 NE 2nd Ave., 305-571-8446

Don't come to this embassy for passports. The name is short for "Embassy of Well-being and Debauchery." You will, however, feel transported to Spain's gourmet capital, San Sebastian, after sampling ambassador Alan Hughes's cunning pintxos (complexly layered Basque-style tapas). From a self-serve bar, choose from a changing selection of skewered stacks; brie, homemade fig jam,



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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

and twizzles of silky jamon Serrano; roast tomato, goat cheese, and anchovies on buttery garlic toast; many more. Small plates, to-die-for desserts like floating island with lychees, and weekend brunch items demonstrate similar mad-chef skills. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Shops at Midtown Miami 3552 NE 1st Ave., 305-482-1832

When kids are sick, you take them to a doctor. If your inner child feels feverish, though, the cure is Felecia Hatcher's handcrafted, vegan-friendly, natural and organic frozen treats – popsicles reinvented for grown-ups. At this literal mom-and-pop shop, Hatcher and husband Derek Pearson offer more than 25 changing flavors, some spiked (like locally sourced mango with bourbon), others just sophisticated (pineapple basil, strawberry balsamic, chocolate banana). No artificial flavors, no refined sugars. Particularly playful inner kids can customize with coatings ranging from nuts to trilly nuts: pop rocks, potato chips, and more. \$

### George's Kitchen & The Loft 3404 N. Miami Ave., 305-438-9199

Veteran Miami restaurateur George-Eric Farge raises the sophistication bar at his new two-story restaurant/lounge. But the real star is Michelin-starred chef Steven Rojas, who combines French technique and personal creativity for dishes like Idiazabal cheese churros with romesco sauce, a green pea pot de crème "jar" with bacon marmalade (accompanied by butter-fried baguette slices for spreading), soy-glazed hamachi crudo with ginger gelee, and caper-sprinkled short rib tartare, the meat's richness cheekily upped by poached bone marrow and caviar. Brunch and lunch items are equally ingenious. \$\$\$

### Gigj 3470 N. Miami Ave., 305-573-1520

As befits its location in artful, working-class Wynwood, Gigj has minimalist modern diner ambiance paired with truly creative contemporary Asian-influenced comfort food from Top Chef contender Jeff McInnis (formerly of the South Beach Ritz-Carlton) at surprisingly low prices. From a menu encompassing noodle and rice bowls, steam-bun ssams, grilled goodies, and raw items, highlights include pillow-light roast pork-stuffed buns, and possibly the world's best BLT, featuring Asian bun "toast," thick pork belly slices rather than bacon, and house-made pickles. There's \$2 beer, too. \$\$\$

### Harry's Pizzeria 3918 N. Miami Ave., 786-275-4963

In this humble space (formerly Pizza Volante) are many key components from Michael's Genuine Food & Drink two blocks east – local/sustainable produce and artisan products; wood-oven cooking; homemade everything (including the ketchup accompanying crisp-outside, custardy-inside polenta fries, a circa 1995 Michael Schwartz signature snack from Nemo). Beautifully blistered, ultra-thin-crust pizzas range from classic Margheritas to pies with house-smoked bacon, trugole (a subtly flavorful – fruity, not funky – Alpine cheese), and other unique toppings. Rounding things out: simple but ingenious salads, ultimate zeppoles, and Florida craft beers. \$\$

### Hurricane Grill & Wings Shops at Midtown Miami Buena Vista Avenue, 305-576-7133

This Florida fast/casual chain became an instant hit in Midtown Miami owing to a winning concept: more than 35 heat-coded sauces and dry rubs meant for custom-tossing with wings and other things (including white-meat "boneless wings," really wing-shaped chicken breast pieces), accompanied by ranch or classic blue-cheese dip and celery. It would be silly to not pair your main with garlic/herb-butter parmesan fries. There are many other items, too, including salads. But hey, celery is salad, right? \$\$

### Jean Paul's House 2426 NE 2nd Ave., 305-573-7373

Jean Paul Desmaison, original chef/co-owner of La Cofradia in Coral Gables, has chosen a decidedly less tony, more transitional neighborhood for this venture. But inside his renovated bungalow, ambiance is stylishly cozy, and the creative contemporary North/South American fusion cuisine is as elegant as ever. Best bets are dishes influenced by Desmaison's native Peru, including crispy pork belly braised in pisco with silky sweet potato purée, and a beautifully balanced nikkei (Japanese/Peruvian) salmon sashimi that does the impossible: tame leche de tigre, Peru's infamous "tiger's milk" marinade. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Jimmy's Kitchen 2700 N. Miami Ave. #5, 305-573-1505

No need to trek to South Beach for what many consider Miami's best classic Puerto Rican mofongo (fried green plantains mashed with fresh garlic, olive oil, and pork cracklings, surrounded by chicken or shrimp in zesty criollo sauce). This new location is bigger and better than the original, plus the mofongo is served every day, not just on weekends. But don't ignore the meal-size salads or high-quality sandwiches, including a pressed tripeleta containing roast pork, bacon, Black Forest ham, provolone, and caramelized onions. \$\$\$

### Joey's Italian Café 2506 NW 2nd Ave., 305-438-0488

The first new restaurant in the Wynwood Café District, this stylish indoor/outdoor Italian hangout is as casually cool as one would hope – and as affordable. There's a five-buck half-serving of spaghetti al pomodoro and respectable vino for under \$30. And few can resist delicately thin, crunchy-crust pizzas like the creative Dolce e Piccante or orgasmic Carbonara. Pastas are fresh; produce is largely local; the mosaic-centered décor is minimalist but inviting. And no need to be wary of the warehouse district at night: Valet parking is free. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### La Latina 3509 NE 2nd Ave., 305-571-9655

At last, an authentic Venezuelan arepera (purveyor of home-made arepas, with a variety of meat, cheese, and veggie fillings) that isn't out in the boonies – and decidedly isn't a dive. With colorful décor concocted from recycled objects, this space, though small, has truly eclectic, Midtown style. The signature corn cakes, crisped outside and fluffy inside, put sodden supermarket specimens to shame. And cachapas (softer, sweeter corn pancakes folded around mozzarella-like fresh cheese) or bollarepitas (cheese-stuffed deep-fried corn cakes, with tangy nata dip) may be even tastier. \$\$\$

### La Provence 2200 Biscayne Blvd., 305-576-8002

(See Brickell / Downtown listing.)

### Lagniappe 3425 NE 2nd Ave., 305-576-0108

In New Orleans, "lagniappe" means "a little extra," like the 13th doughnut in a baker's dozen. And that's what you get at this combination wine and cheese bar/backyard BBQ/entertainment venue. Choose artisan cheeses and charcuterie from the fridges, hand them over when you pay (very little), and they'll be plated with extras: olives, bread, changing luscious condiments. Or grab fish, chicken, veggies, or steak (with salad or cornbread) from the hidden yard's grill. Relax in the comfie mismatched furniture, over extensive wine/beer choices and laidback live music. No cover, no attitude. \$\$

### Latin Café 2000 3251 Biscayne Blvd., 305-576-3838

The menu is similar to that at many of our town's Latin cafés, largely classic Cuban entrées and sandwiches, with a smattering of touches from elsewhere in Latin America, such as a Peruvian jalea mixta (marinated mixed seafood), or paella Valenciana from Spain, which many Miami eateries consider a Latin country. What justifies the new millennium moniker is the more modern, yuppified/yucafied ambiance, encouraged by an expansive, rustic wooden deck. \$\$

### Lemoni Café 4600 NE 2nd Ave., 305-571-5080

The menu here reads like your standard sandwiches/salads/starters primer. What it doesn't convey is the freshness of the ingredients and the care that goes into their use. Entrée-size salads range from an elegant spinach (goat cheese, pears, walnuts, raisins) to chunky homemade chicken salad on a bed of mixed greens. Sandwiches (cold baguette subs, hot pressed paninis, or wraps, all accompanied by side salads) include a respectable Cuban and a veggie wrap with a deceptively rich-tasting light salad cream. \$\$\$

### Lime Fresh Mexican Grill Shops at Midtown Miami Buena Vista Avenue, 305-576-5463

Like its South Beach predecessor, this Lime was an instant hit, as much for being a hip new Midtown hangout as for its carefully crafted Tex-Mex food. The concept is "fast casual" rather than fast food – meaning nice enough for a night out.

It also means ingredients are always fresh. Seafood tacos are about as exotic as the menu gets, but the mahi mahi for fish tacos comes from a local supplier, and salsas are housemade daily. Niceties include low-carb tortillas and many Mexican beers. \$

### Limón y Sabor 3045 Biscayne Blvd., 786-431-5739

In this dramatically renovated space, the room is now light and open, and the food is authentic Peruvian, with seafood a specialty. Portions are huge, prices low, quality high. Especially good are their versions of pescado a lo macho (fish fillet topped with mixed seafood in a creamy, zesty sauce); jalea (breaded and deep-fried fish, mixed seafood, and yuca, topped with onion/pepper/lime salsa), and yuca in hot yet fruity rocoto chili cream sauce. \$\$\$

### Lost & Found Saloon 185 NW 36th St., 305-576-1008

There's an artsy/alternative feel to this casual and friendly Wynwood eatery, which, since opening as a weekday-only breakfast and lunch joint in 2005, has grown with its neighborhood. It's now open for dinner six nights a week, serving Southwestern-style fare at rock-bottom prices. Dishes like piñon and pepita-crusted salmon, chipotle-drizzled endive stuffed with lump crab, or customizable tacos average \$5-\$8. Also available: big breakfasts and salads, hearty soups, housemade pastries like lemon-crusted wild berry pie, and a hip beer and wine list. \$

### Mandolin Aegean Bistro 4312 NE 2nd Ave., 305-572-6066

Inside this converted 1940s home's blue-and-white dining room – or even more atmospherically, its tree-sheltered garden – diners feast on authentic rustic fare from both Greece and Turkey. Make a meal of multinational mezés: a Greek sampler of creamy tzatziki yogurt dip, smoky eggplant purée, and airy tarama caviar spread; and a Turkish sampler of hummus, fava purée, and rich tomato-walnut dip. The meze of mussels in lemony wine broth is, with Mandolin's fresh-baked flatbread, almost a full meal in itself. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### MC Kitchen 4141 NE 2nd Ave., 305-456-9948

Chef/co-owner Dena Marino calls MC's food "modern Italian" – neither an evocative description nor explanation for why this place is one of our town's hottest tickets. But tasting tells the tale. Marino's food incorporates her entire culinary background, from her Nonna's traditional Italian-American kitchen to a long stint in Michael Chiarello's famed contemporary Californian eatery Tra Vigne, with pronounced personal twists that make eating here uniquely exciting. Particularly definitive: lunchtime's "piadenas," saladlike seasonal/regional ingredient combinations atop heavenly homemade flatbreads. Cocktails feature ingredients from za'atar to salmon roe. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Mercadito Midtown 3252 NE 1st Ave., 786-369-0423

Some people frequent this fashionable restolounge, festooned with graffiti-style murals designed to evoke a bustling Mexican street market, just for the dangerously smooth margaritas. But the main must-haves here are tacos, encased in a rarity: genuinely made-from-scratch corn tortillas, small but fatly-stuffed. Of 11 varieties, our favorite is the carnitas (juicy braised pork, spicy chili de arbol slaw, toasted peanuts). A close second: the hongos, intensely flavorful huitlacoche and wild mushrooms, with manchego and salsa verde – a reminder that vegetarian food need not be bland. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Michael's Genuine Food and Drink 130 NE 40th St., 305-573-5550

An instant smash hit, this truly neighborhood-oriented restaurant from chef Michael Schwartz offers down-to-earth fun food in a comfortable, casually stylish indoor/outdoor setting. Fresh, organic ingredients are emphasized, but dishes range from cutting-edge (crispy beef cheeks with whipped celeriac, celery salad, and chocolate reduction) to simple comfort food: deviled eggs, homemade potato chips with pan-fried onion dip, or a whole wood-roasted chicken. There's also a broad range of prices and portion sizes to encourage frequent visits. Michael's Genuine also features an eclectic, affordable wine list and a full bar. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Mike's at Venetia 555 NE 15th St., 9th floor, 305-374-5731

This family-owned Irish pub, on the pool deck of the Venetia

condo, for more than 15 years has been a popular lunch and dinner hang-out for local journalists and others who appreciate honest cheap eats and drinks. Regulars know daily specials are the way to go. Depending on the day, fish, churrasco, or roast turkey with all the trimmings are all prepared fresh. Big burgers and steak dinners are always good. A limited late-night menu provides pizza, wings, ribs, and salad till 3:00 a.m. \$\$\$

### Morgans Restaurant 28 NE 29th St., 305-573-9678

Housed in a beautifully refurbished 1930s private home, Morgans serves eclectic, sometimes internationally influenced contemporary American cuisine compelling enough to attract hordes. Dishes are basically comfort food, but *ultimate* comfort food: the most custardy, fluffy French toast imaginable; shoe-string frites that rival Belgium's best; mouthwatering maple-basted bacon; miraculously terrific tofu (crispy panko-crust and apricot/soy-glazed); even a "voluptuous grilled cheese sandwich" – definitely a "don't ask, don't tell your cardiologist" item. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### NoVe Kitchen & Bar 1750 N. Bayshore Dr., 305-503-1000

At NoVe, the restolounge at the Opera Tower condo in NoVe (new nickname for the bayfront neighborhood north of the Venetian Causeway), the food is East-West. Meaning you can get burgers, pasta, and so on, or try the inventive Asian small plates and sushi specialties Hiro Terada originated at his past posts, Doraku and Moshi Moshi: the Atlantis roll (tempura conch with asparagus, avocado, scallions, and curry sauce); spicy, crunchy fried tofu atop kimchi salad; much more. Open 6:00 a.m. for breakfast to 3:00 a.m., it is kid-friendly and dog-friendly, too. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Oak Tavern 35 NE 40th St., 786-391-1818

With a festively lantern-lit oak tree on the outdoor dining patio and stylishly playful lamps mimicking oaks inside, chef/restaurateur David Bracha of River Oyster Bar has transformed a previously cold space to warm. Food is equally inviting. The mostly small-plates seasonal menu roams the globe from supreme Vietnamese banh mi (with pork belly and foie gras) to down-home buttermilk biscuits with bacon butter, and home-made charcuterie. If available, don't miss Hawaiian-inspired steelhead poke; substituting the salmonlike but more delicate trout for the usual tuna transports this crudo to heavenly heights. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Orange Café + Art 2 NE 40th St., 305-571-4070

The paintings hanging in this tiny, glass-enclosed café are for sale. And for those who don't have thousands of dollars to shell out for the local art on the walls, less than ten bucks will get you art on a plate, including a Picasso: chorizo, prosciutto, manchego cheese, baby spinach, and basil on a crusty baguette. Other artfully named and crafted edibles include salads, daily soups, several pastas (like the Matisse, flocchi pouches filled with pears and cheese), and house-baked pastries. \$

### Pasha's 3801 Biscayne Blvd., 305-573-0201

(See Brickell/Downtown listing)

### Pasta Folie's Shops at Midtown Miami 3252 NE 1st Ave. #118, 786-382-0205

In France the word "folie" can mean "extravagant." More often it means "madness." It's the latter translation that first comes to mind when perusing the menu of this French Riviera pasta/pizza fast-casual chain, whose concept is pastas, plus pizzas, from around the world – even Italy. Don't expect authenticity from the more exotic toppings; they basically contain one typical ingredient (along with a generic onions/peppers/veg assortment): bean sprouts in Thailand's spaghetti, pineapple in Bali's, curry sauce on India's. Do expect super-fresh sauces, made daily. Friendly staffers and fun. \$\$

### Pieducks 3500 N. Miami Ave., 305-576-5550

(See Brickell / Downtown listing)

### Pride & Joy 2800 N. Miami Ave., 305-456-9548

Behind this Wynwood warehouse façade you'll find pure Southern roadhouse, and the backyard patio is an even more relaxing

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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

place to kick back with beer, blues music, and barbecue from pit master Myron Mixon. Oddly, considering Mixon's many BBQ championships, the 'cue can be inconsistent. Our favorite choices: St. Louis ribs, tender without being falling-off-the-bone overcooked, and enjoyably fattier than baby backs; vinegar-doused pulled pork sandwiches, which, unlike meat plates, come with sides – fries, plus slaw to pile on for added juice and crunch. \$\$\$

### Primo's

1717 N. Bayshore Dr., 305-371-9055

The imposing, cavernous lobby of the Grand doesn't have that "do drop in" locals' hangout vibe. But this lively Italian spot is actually a great addition to the neighborhood. The pizzas alone – brick-oven specimens with toppings ranging from classic pepperoni to prosciutto/arugula – would be draw enough. But pastas also please: diners' choice of starch, with mix-and-match sauces and extras. And the price is right, with few entrées topping \$20. The capper: It's open past midnight every day but Sunday. \$\$

### Primo Pizza Miami

3451 NE 1st Ave., 305-535-2555

Just a few years ago, chain pizza joints were dominant most everywhere. Today many places now offer authentic Italian or delicate designer pizzas. But a satisfying Brooklyn-style street slice? Fuhgeddit. Thankfully that's the speciality of this indoor/outdoor pizzeria: big slices with chewy crusts (made from imported NY tap water) that aren't ultra-thin and crisp, but flexible enough to fold lengthwise, and medium-thick – sturdy enough to support toppings applied with generous all-American abandon. Take-out warning: Picking up a whole pie? Better bring the SUV, not the Morris Mini.

### Sakaya Kitchen

Shops at Midtown Miami, Buena Vista Avenue  
305-576-8096

This chef-driven, fast-casual Asian eatery is more an izakaya (in Japan, a pub with food) than a sakaya (sake shop). But why quibble about words with so many more intriguing things to wrap your mouth around? The concept takes on street-food favorites from all over Asia, housemade daily from quality fresh ingredients. French Culinary Institute-trained Richard Hales does change his menu, so we'd advise immediately grabbing some crispy Korean chicken wings and Chinese-inspired, open-faced roast pork buns with sweet chili sauce and homemade pickles. \$\$

### Sake Room

275 NE 18th St., 305-755-0122

Sake takes a back seat to sushi – and sophisticated décor – at this small but sleek restoleague. Among the seafood offerings, you won't find exotica or local catches, but all the usual sushi/sashimi favorites, though in more interesting form, thanks to sauces that go beyond standard soy – spicy sriracha, garlic/ponzu oil, and many more. Especially recommended: the yuzu hamachi roll, the lobster tempura maki, and panko-coated spicy shrimp with hot-and-sour Mayo and a salad. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Salad Creations

2001 Biscayne Blvd., 305-576-5333

At this fast-casual restaurant, diners can enjoy a wide variety of chef-created salads and wraps, or go the DIY route, choosing from one of four greens options; four dozen add-ons (fresh, dried, or pickled veggies and fruits, plus cheeses and slightly sinful pleasures like candied pecans or wonton strips); a protein (seafood or poultry); and two dozen dressings, ranging from classic (Thousand Island, bleu cheese) to creative contemporary (spicy Asian peanut, cucumber wasabi, blueberry pomegranate). Additionally, the place creates lovely catering platters, plus individual lunchboxes – perfect picnic or plane food. \$-\$\$

### Salumeria 104

3451 NE 1st Ave. #104, 305-424-9588

In Italy, salumerias started, like American delicatessens, as shops selling salumi (cured meats), but evolved into the equivalent of eat-in deli/restaurants that also serve cold and hot prepared foods. At this modern Midtown salumeria, the soups-to-salads-to-sweets range of fare is the same. Custom-sliced imported cold cuts are a main focus, especially for those who enjoy taste-testing a plate pairing Italy's two most famous prosciuttos: Parma and San Daniele. But homemade pastas are also impressive, as are hard-to-find regional entrées like fegato alla Veneziana, which will turn liver-haters into lovers. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Salsa Fiesta

2929 Biscayne Blvd., 305-400-8245

The first stateside offshoot of a popular Venezuelan mini chain,

this "urban Mexican grill" serves health-conscious, made-fresh-daily fare similar in concept to some fast-casual competitors. But there are indeed differences here, notably pan-Latin options: black beans as well as red; thin, delightfully crunchy tostones (available as a side or as the base for a uniquely tasty take on normal nachos). Other pluses include weekday happy hours with two-for-one beers – and free parking. \$-\$\$

### S & S Diner

1757 NE 2nd Ave., 305-373-4291

At its former Lincoln Road location, World Resource's café was better known for people-watching than for its standard sushi/Thai menu. But as the new name signals, this relocation is a reinvention. The indoor/outdoor space is charming, but creative takes on popular pan-Asian street foods are the real draw. Travel from Japan and Thailand through Korea, Vietnam, China, the Philippines, and beyond via light housemade momo, curried potato-stuffed Tibetan/Nepalese steamed dumplings; savory pulled pork buns with kimchi and crisped onions. Noodle dishes, hot or chilled, are especially appealing. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Shokudo World Resource Café

4740 NE 2nd Ave., 305-758-7782

At its former Lincoln Road location, World Resource's café was better known for people-watching than for its standard sushi/Thai menu. But as the new name signals, this relocation is a reinvention. The indoor/outdoor space is charming, but creative takes on popular pan-Asian street foods are the real draw. Travel from Japan and Thailand through Korea, Vietnam, China, the Philippines, and beyond via light housemade momo, curried potato-stuffed Tibetan/Nepalese steamed dumplings; savory pulled pork buns with kimchi and crisped onions. Noodle dishes, hot or chilled, are especially appealing. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Sugarcane Raw Bar Grill

3250 NE 1st Ave., 786-369-0353

This chic indoor/outdoor space is an offspring of Lincoln Road's SushiSamba Dromo and a sibling of Sugarcane lounges in NYC and Las Vegas, but more informal than the former and more food-oriented than the latter, as three kitchens – normal, raw bar, and robata charcoal grill – make clear. Chef Timon Balloo's LatAsian small plates range from subtle orange/fennel-marinated salmon crudo to intensely smoky-rich short ribs. At the daily happy hour, select dishes (like steamed pork buns with apple kimchi) are discounted. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Tony Chan's Water Club

1717 N. Bayshore Dr., 305-374-8888

The décor at this upscale place, located in the Grand, looks too glitzy to serve anything but politely Americanized Chinese food. But the American dumbing-down is minimal. Many dishes are far more authentic and skillfully prepared than those found elsewhere in Miami, like delicate but flavorful yu pan quail. Moist sea bass fillet has a beautifully balanced topping of scalion, ginger, cilantro, and subtly sweet/salty sauce. And Peking duck is served as three traditional courses: crêpe-wrapped crispy skin, meat sautéed with crisp veggies, savory soup to finish. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Wine Vault Miami

Shops at Midtown Miami  
Fountain Circle #105, 786-691-2000

From a Wine Vault press release: "Over 1300 square feet of pure decadence." In fact, the soaring, two-story space, complete with glass elevator, has a look that lives up to the hype. But the most decadent thing inside is a nibble from its tapas list: chocolate-covered bacon. Go ahead and make a meal of it. We grown-ups can eat what we want. More substantial plates to accompany the roughly four dozen wines, artisan beers, or cocktails include chorizo with new potatoes, and sweetly piquant piquillo peppers stuffed with shredded tuna. Happy-hour wine prices are so low we'd better not mention them. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Wynwood Kitchen & Bar

2550 NW 2nd Ave., 305-722-8959

The exterior is eye-popping enough, with murals from world-famous outdoor artists, but it's the interior that grabs you. Colorful and exotic work by Shepard Fairey, Christian Awe, and other acclaimed artists makes it one of the most striking restaurant spaces anywhere. As for food, the original menu has been replaced with Spanish/Latin/Mediterranean-inspired favorites from chef Miguel Aguilar (formerly of Alma de Cuba): gazpacho or black bean soups; shredded chicken ropa vieja empanadas with cilantro crema; grilled octopus skewers with tapenade; plus fingerling potato-chorizo hash and other seasonal farm-to-table veg dishes. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

## Upper Eastside

### Andiamo

5600 Biscayne Blvd. 305-762-5751

With brick-oven pizzerias popping up all over town the past few years, it's difficult to remember the dark days when this part of Mark Soyka's 55th Street Station complex was mainland Miami's sole source of open-flame-cooked pies. But the pizzas still hold up against the newbie pack, especially since exec chef Frank Crupi has upped the ante with unique-to-Miami offerings like a white (tomato-free) New Haven clam pie. Also available: salads, panini, and a tasty meatball appetizer with ricotta. There's a respectable wine and beer list, too. \$\$

### Balans Biscayne

6789 Biscayne Blvd., 305-534-9191

It took longer than expected, but this Brit import's third Miami venue finally opened, and rather quietly – which has an upside. It's easier to get a table here (and to park, thanks to the free lot on 68th Street) than at Lincoln Road or Brickell. This, along with the venue's relatively large, open-to-the-street outdoor area, contributes to a more relaxed, neighborhood-focused vibe. The fun menu of global comfort food is the same (ranging from a creamy-centered cheese soufflé through savory Asian potstickers and, at breakfast, fluffy pecan/maple-garnished pancakes) and prepared as reliably well. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Blue Collar

6730 Biscayne Blvd., 305-756-0366

Like its predecessor in this space (Michael Bloise's American Noodle Bar), this working-class-themed eatery is helmed by a former fine-dining chef, Daniel Serfer, a Chef Allen's vet who now crafts casual, creative fare at prices all can afford. Dishes are eclectic. The roughly dozen veggie dishes alone range from curried cauliflower purée to maduros to bleu cheese roasted asparagus. Shrimp and grits compete with any in Charleston; pork and beans, topped with a perfectly runny fried egg, beats Boston's best. \$\$\$

### Boteco

916 NE 79th St., 305-757-7735

This strip of 79th Street is rapidly becoming a cool alt-culture enclave thanks to inviting hangouts like this rustic indoor/outdoor Brazilian restaurant and bar. Especially bustling on nights featuring live music, it's even more fun on Sundays, when the fenced backyard hosts an informal fair and the menu includes Brazil's national dish, feijoada, a savory stew of beans plus fresh and cured meats. But the everyday menu, ranging from unique, tapas-like pastéis to hefty Brazilian entrées, is also appealing – and budget-priced. \$\$

### DeVita's

7251 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-8282

This Italian/Argentine pizzeria, housed in a charming bungalow and featuring a breezy patio, covers multicultural bases. If the Old World Rucola pizza (a classic Margherita topped with arugula, prosciutto, and shredded parmesan) doesn't do the trick, the New World Especial (a Latin pie with hearts of palm and boiled eggs) just might. Also available are pastas, salads, sandwiches, dinner entrées (eggplant parmigiana with spaghetti, lomito steak with Argentinean potato salad), and desserts (tiramisu or flan). \$

### Dogma Grill

7030 Biscayne Blvd. 305-759-3433

Since Frankie and Priscilla Crupi took over this hot dog stand, the menu has changed significantly, with some items eliminated (any vegetarian hot dogs, salads, chichi toppings like avocado). But choices have expanded to include new dog choices (brats, Italian sausage, more) plus burgers and other classic eastern U.S. regional urban street foods: New England lobster rolls, New Orleans po'boys, Jersey shore cheese Taylors (pork roll), Baltimore crab cake sandwiches, and naturally, Philly's of all sorts – cheese steak and beyond. \$\$\$

### East Side Pizza

731 NE 79th St., 305-758-5351

Minestrone, sure. But a pizzeria menu with carrot ginger soup? Similarly many Italian-American pizzerias offer entrées like spaghetti and meatballs, but East Side also has pumpkin ravioli

in brown butter/sage sauce, wild mushroom ravioli, and other surprisingly upscale choices, including imported Peroni beer. As for the pizza, they are classic pies, available whole or by the slice, made with fresh plum tomato sauce and Grande mozzarella (considered the top American pizza cheese). Best seating for eating is at the sheltered outdoor picnic tables. \$

### Fiorito

5555 NE 2nd Ave.,

305-754-2899

While owners Max and Cristian Alvarez's description of their eatery as "a little Argentinean shack" is as charming as the brothers themselves, it conveys neither the place's cool warmth nor the food's exciting elegance. Dishes are authentically Argentine, but far from standard steakhouse stuff. Chef Cristian's background at popular pop-up The Dining Room becomes instantly understandable in dishes like orange and herb-scented lechon confit (with pumpkin mash, pickled cabbage salad, and Dijon mojo) or sopa de calabaza, derived from Argentina's peasant stew loco, but here a refined, creamy soup. Many more surprises – even steaks. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### The Federal Food, Drink & Provisions

5132 Biscayne Blvd.,

305-758-9559

At the Fed, expect what locals know to expect from sommelier/chef team Aniece Meinhold and Cesar Zapata, whose previous restaurant concepts have included Blue Piano (gourmet stoner snacks) and Vietnamese pop-up Phuc Yea. That is, expect the unexpected. The Fed is an updated tavern featuring creative, from-scratch takes on traditional American regional dishes: flaky Southern biscuits with sausage gravy (and crisp-coated sweetbreads, if desired); Northeastern-inspired "pig wings" (pork drumettes with homemade Buffalo sauce, blue cheese mousse, and pickled veggies). Desserts, from third partner Alejandro Ortiz, include sinful sticky buns. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Garden of Eatin'

136 NW 62nd St., 305-754-8050

Housed in a yellow building that's nearly invisible from the street, the Garden has the comfortable feel of a beach bar, and generous servings of inexpensive Afro-Caribbean vegan food. Large or small plates, with salad and fried sweet plantains (plus free soup for eat-in lunchers), are served for five or seven bucks. Also available are snacks like vegetarian blue corn tacos, desserts like sweet potato pie, and a breakfast menu featuring organic blueberry waffles with soy sausage patties. \$

### Go To Sushi

5140 Biscayne Blvd., 305-759-0914

This friendly, family-run Japanese fast-food eatery offers original surprises like the Caribbean roll (a festively green parsley-coated maki stuffed with crispy fried shrimp, avocado, sweet plantain, and spicy Mayo), or a wonderfully healthful sesame-seasoned chicken soup with spinach, rice noodles, and sizable slices of poultry. Health ensured, you can enjoy a guiltless pig-out on Fireballs: fried dumplings of chicken, cabbage, and egg, crusted with quills – really a delectable crunchy noodle mix. \$

### Iron Side Café

7600 NE 4th Ct.,

305-759-0551

Located in the Little River "business" (meaning warehouse) district, inside an art complex that looks like just another factory, this eatery is easy to miss. But it shouldn't be missed. Both the cozy interior and more expansive terrace provide picturesque settings for artfully plated, seriously organic and locally sourced fare from Nuno Grullon, original exec chef at Metro Organic Bistro. Particularly recommended: tuna tartare with a unique spicy lemon dressing; ossa buco featuring flavorful grass-fed beef from Gaucho Ranch right down the road. Saturday BBQ/gallery nights are especially hip. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Jimmy's East Side Diner

7201 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-3692

Open for more than 30 years, Jimmy's respects the most important American diner tradition: breakfast at any hour. And now that the place is open for dinner, you can indulge your breakfast cravings for several more hours. There are blueberry hot cakes and pecan waffles; eggs any style, including omelets and open-face frittatas; and a full range of sides: biscuits and

<p><b>Monday..... \$9.50</b> 1/2 Deli Sandwich and cup of Soup served with Cole Slaw or Potato Salad</p> <p><b>Tuesday..... \$8.95</b> Tuna Fish Appetizer or Sandwich served with Cole Slaw or Potato Salad. Choice of Bagel or Toast</p> <p><b>Wednesday..... \$9.95</b> Open-faced Turkey Platter served with Mashed Potatoes and House Vegetables</p> <p><b>Thursday..... \$9.95</b> Choice of Corned Beef or Pastrami Sandwich served with choice of Cole Slaw or Potato Salad</p> <p><b>Friday..... \$11.95</b> Nova Appetizer served with Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Cream Cheese and garnish. Choice of Bagel or Bialy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No Substitutions • No Sharing • Dine-In ONLY</b></p>	<h1 style="font-size: 2em; color: #0056b3; margin: 0;">Daily Lunch Specials</h1> <p style="color: #0056b3; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Specials are served Monday thru Friday 11:00am to 3:00pm (Excluding Holidays)</p> <p style="color: #0056b3; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">All Lunch Specials include Fountain Beverage or Fresh Brewed Iced Tea or Coffee</p> 	 <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">305.892.2435</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">11064 Biscayne Blvd</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Miami, FL 33161</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">www.bagelsandcompany.com</p>
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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

sausage gravy, grits, hash, hash browns, even hot oatmeal. And don't forget traditional diner entrées like meat loaf, roast turkey, liver and onions, plus burgers, salad platters, and homemade chicken soup. \$-\$

### La Cigale

7281 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-0014

"Bistro" can mean almost anything these days, but with owners who are a husband/wife team recently arrived from Marseille, it's not surprising that this neighborhood wine bistro is the classic kind found in France – a home away from home where the contemporary but cozy space is matched by the southern French comfort food coming from the open kitchen. Drop in for drinks and snacks such as artisan cheeses and charcuterie, or enjoy full meals ranging from classic (wine-poached mussels; a boldly sauced steak/frites) to creative (Parma ham-wrapped tuna loin). \$-\$-\$

### Lo De Lea

7001 Biscayne Blvd., 305-456-3218

In Casa Toscana's former space, this cute, contemporary parillada is proof that you can have an Argentinean meal and a cholesterol test in the same month. While traditional parillada dishes are tasty, they're meat/fat-heavy, basically heaps of grilled beef. Here the grill is also used for vegetables (an unusually imaginative assortment, including bok choy, endive, and fennel), two of which are paired with your protein of choice. You can indulge in a mouthwateringly succulent vacio (flank steak), and walk out without feeling like you're the cow. \$-\$-\$

### Magnum Lounge

709 NE 79th St., 305-757-3368

It's a restaurant. It's a lounge. But it's decidedly not a typical Miami restolounge, or like anything else in Miami. Forbidding from the outside, on the inside it's like a time-trip to a cabaret in pre-WWII Berlin: bordello-red décor, romantically dim lighting, show-tune live piano bar entertainment, and to match the ambiance, elegantly updated retro food served with style and a smile. For those feeling flush, home-style fried chicken is just like mom used to make – in her wildest dreams. \$\$\$

### Metro Organic Bistro

7010 Biscayne Blvd., 305-751-8756

Big changes have come to Karma the car wash, the first being a separate new name for the revamped restaurant: Metro Organic Bistro, an all-organic fine-dining restaurant where simple preparations reveal and enhance natural flavors. An entirely new menu places emphasis on grilled organic meat and fish dishes. Try the steak frites – organic, grass-fed skirt steak with organic chimichurri and fresh-cut fries. Vegetarians will love the organic portabella focaccia. Dine either inside the architect-designed restaurant or outdoors on the patio. Beer and wine. \$-\$-\$

### Michy's

6927 Biscayne Blvd., 305-759-2001

Don't even ask why Michele Bernstein, with a top-chef résumé, not to mention regular Food Network appearances, opened a homey restaurant in an emerging but far from fully gentrified neighborhood. Just be glad she did, as you dine on white almond gazpacho or impossibly creamy ham and blue cheese croquetas. Though most full entrées also come in half-size portions (at almost halved prices), the tab can add up fast. The star herself is usually in the kitchen. Parking in the rear off 69th Street. \$\$\$-\$

### Mi Vida Café

7244 Biscayne Blvd., 305-759-6020

At this indoor/outdoor vegetarian and raw-food vegan café, culinary-school-trained chef/owner Daniela Lagamma produces purist produce-oriented dishes that are easy to understand, like sparkling-fresh salads and smoothies, plus more technique-intensive mock meat or cheese items, based on soy proteins, that satisfy even confirmed carnivores. Particularly impressive on the regular menu: a superior Sloppy Joe made with mushroom confit, braised homemade seitan, spinach, and rich almond romesco sauce; and cannelloni de verdura, homemade crepes stuffed with spinach and cashew "ricotta." Do check the daily specials, too. \$-\$-\$

### Moonchine

7100 Biscayne Blvd., 305-759-3999

Like its Brickell-area sibling Indochine, this friendly Asian bistro serves fare from three nations: Japan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Menus are also similar, split between traditional dishes like pad Thai and East/West fusion creations like the Vampire sushi roll (shrimp tempura, tomato, cilantro, roasted garlic). But it also carves out its own identity with original creations, including yellow curry-spiced fried rice. Nearly everything is low in sodium, fat, and calories. A large rear patio is inviting for dining and entertainment. \$-\$-\$

### Moshi Moshi

7232 Biscayne Blvd., 786-220-9404

This offspring of South Beach old-timer Moshi Moshi is a cross between a sushi bar and an izakaya (Japanese tapas bar). Even more striking than the hip décor is the food's unusually upscale quality. Sushi ranges from pristine individual nigiri to over-the-top maki rolls. Tapas are intriguing, like arabiki sausage, a sweet-savory pork fingerling frank; rarely found in restaurants even in Japan, they're popular Japanese home-cooking items. And rice-based plates like Japanese curry (richer/sweeter than Indian types) satisfy even the biggest appetites. \$-\$

### News Lounge

5582 NE 4th Ct., 305-758-9932

Mark Soyka's new News is, as its name suggests, more a friendly neighborhood hangout and watering hole than a full-fledged eatery. Nevertheless the menu of light bites is – along with other lures like an inviting outdoor patio and rest rooms that resemble eclectic art galleries – part of the reason visitors stay for hours. Especially recommended are fat mini-burgers with chipotle ketchup; a brie, turkey, and mango chutney sandwich on crusty baguette; and what many feel is the original café's Greatest Hit: creamy hummus with warm pita. \$

### Ni.Do. Caffè & Mozzarella Bar

7295 Biscayne Blvd., 305-960-7022

Don't let this little café's easily overlooked strip-mall location, or its informal interior, fool you. The warm welcome is authentically Italian, as are cleverly crafted antipasti, simple but full-flavored pastas, and homemade pastries (from rosemary breadsticks to fruit-topped dessert tortas) that will transport your taste buds to Tuscany. And the housemade mozzarella or burrata cheeses – truly milk elevated to royalty – will transport you to heaven. A small market area provides Italian staples, plus superb salumi and the magnificent mozz, to go. \$-\$-\$

### Ouzo's

620 NE 78th St., 305-758-2929

Unlike the wide-ranging Mediterranean eatery formerly in this riverside space, Anise, which Ouzo's Liza Meli co-owns, Ouzo's menu returns to her heritage (and to her original North Beach Ouzo's, 2003-2006): pure Greek, prepared with the full-flavored simplicity of authentic taverna food. It's hard to choose between making a meal of mezes (small plates, including lovely, light taramosalata fish roe spread) or grilled seafood (which really tastes, not merely looks, grilled). Fortunately, dip and seafood sampler platters mean you needn't choose. Just don't miss homemade lemon cake, a family recipe. \$\$\$

### Royal Bavarian Schnitzel Haus

1085 NE 79th St., 305-754-8002

With Christmas lights perpetually twinkling and party noises emanating from a new outdoor biergarten, this German restaurant is owner Alex Richter's one-man gentrification project, transforming a formerly uninviting stretch of 79th Street one pils at a time. The fare includes housemade sausages (mild veal bratwurst, hearty mixed beef/pork bauernwurst, spicy garlicwurst) with homemade mustard and catsup; savory yet near-greaseless potato pancakes; and, naturally, schnitzels, a choice of delicate pounded pork, chicken, or veal patties served with a half-dozen different sauces. \$-\$-\$

### Siam Rice

7941 Biscayne Blvd., 305-758-0516

You'll find all the familiar favorite Thai and Japanese items here, and prices for curries and noodle dishes (all customizable regarding choice of protein, preparation, and heat level) are especially good at lunch. But don't overlook somewhat pricier specialties like a deep-fried yet near-greaseless boneless half duck with veggies in red curry sauce. There's also an unusually extensive list of salads, some with inventive fusion touches, like a grilled shrimp/soba salad featuring traditional Thai flavors (sriracha chiles, fish sauce, lime) and Japanese green tea noodles. \$-\$-\$

### Soyka

5556 NE 4th Court, 305-759-3117

Since opening in 1999, Soyka has often been credited with sparking the Upper Eastside's revival. But the 2010 arrival of three Joe Allen veterans as executive chef, pastry chef, and sommelier signaled a culinary revival for the restolounge, always a neighborhood focal point, now more food-focused. The contemporary comfort food menu ranges from fun small plates (deviled eggs with smoked salmon and dill, crisp-fried focchi pockets with gorgonzola sauce, oysters Rockefeller) to heftier items like burgers and steak au poivre. And don't miss the sticky date/toffee pudding. \$-\$-\$

### Sushi Siam

5582 NE 4th Ct., 305-751-7818

On the menu of sushi-bar specialties plus a small selection of Thai and Japanese cooked dishes, there are a few surprises, such as a unique lobster maki that's admittedly huge in price (\$25.95), but also in size: six ounces of crisp-fried lobster chunks, plus asparagus, avocado, lettuce, tobiko (flying fish), masago (smelt) roes, and special sauces. Thai dishes come with a choice of more than a dozen sauces, ranging from traditional red or green curries to the inventive, such as an unconventional honey sauce. \$\$\$

### Sweet Saloon

7100 Biscayne Blvd., 305-759-3999

At this dessert/snack/cocktail bar, from the owner of Moonchine, you'll find live and DJ entertainment, too, from 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. – assuming you can find the place, that is. It's above the pan-Asian eatery, up a hidden back staircase. Asian savory snacks include dumplings, edamame, krab rangoons, satays. Desserts range from honey American (NY cheesecake, mini cupcakes) to continental (strawberries melba, housemade Belgian waffles, a shareable chocolate fondue/fruit platter). Actually, some cocktails double as desserts (a Godiva dark chocolate martini) or Asian savories (infusion jars of Stoli and lemongrass). \$\$

### Uva's

6900 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-9022

Formerly UVA 69, this casual-chic café/lounge, a MiMo neighborhood pioneer, has changed its name and original owners, but remains an all-day-to-late-night hangout. And menu strong points also remain, from fresh-baked pastries and breads to elegant cross-cultural sandwiches (particularly two Latin-inspired upgrades: a classic Cuban with French ham, cornichons, and a baguette; and la minuta, a beer-battered fish fillet on focaccia with cilantro aioli). Whether diners opt for full entrées or make a meal of small plates, the subtle global blending makes fusion make sense. \$-\$-\$

### Yiya's Gourmet Cuban Bakery

646 NE 79th St., 305-754-3337

A true community jewel, this bakery is also a most welcoming café, serving lunch specials from chef Delsa Bernardo (who co-owns the place with attorney Abbie Cuellar) that are home-made right down to the herbs grown on the bakery's window sills. Bernardo's pan con lechon sandwiches and flaky-crust Cuban pastries are legend. But she also crafts treats not found at average Cuban bakeries, like pizzas using housemade

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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

Indian naan bread. Additionally Bernardo carries unique treats produced by a few friends: candies, cupcakes, and exotically flavored flans. \$

### NORTH BAY VILLAGE

**The Crab House**  
1551 79th St. Causeway, 305-868-7085  
www.crabhouseseafood.com

Established in 1975, this Miami fish house was acquired by Landry's in 1996 and is now part of a chain. But the classic décor (knotty pine walls, tile floors, booths, outdoor waterfront deck) still evokes the good old days. Freshness fanatics will be happy with à la carte favorites like the All-American fisherman's platters, or global specials like Szechuan shrimp, that change seasonally. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

**Oggi's Caffè**  
1666 79th St. Causeway, 305-866-1238

This cozy, romantic spot started back in 1989 as a pasta factory (supplying numerous high-profile restaurants) as well as a neighborhood eatery. And the wide range of budget-friendly, homemade pastas, made daily, remains the main draw for its large and loyal clientele. Choices range from homey, meaty lasagna to luxuriant crab ravioli with creamy lobster sauce, with occasional forays into creative exotica such as seaweed spaghetti, with sea scallops, shiitakes, and fresh tomatoes. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

**Sabor Latin Restaurant & Cafe**  
1880 79th St. Cswy., 305-741-2020

This family-run restaurant serves big portions of homey traditional food from several Latin American countries, including Cuba (pan con bistec, ropa vieja), Mexico (nachos, tacos, quesadillas), and Peru (lomo saltado). But the specialty is Colombian classics, from snacks like empanadas to a bandeja paisa combo (grilled steak, chorizo, a gargantuan crispy chicharron strip, fried egg, arepa, plantains, beans, rice). Particularly recommended: daily specials including two meal-in-a-bowl chicken soups, ajiao, and sancocho. If you've wondered about the much-debated difference, here's where to test the taste. \$\$-\$

**Sushi Siam**  
1524 NE 79th St. Causeway, 305-864-7638  
(See Miami / Upper Eastside listing)

**Trio on the Bay**  
1601 79th St. Causeway, 305-866-1234  
Several ventures have failed in this expansive indoor/outdoor waterfront space, but that's hard to imagine once you've experienced this stunning incarnation as an exciting yet affordable restaurant/nightclub where food definitely doesn't play second fiddle to entertainment. Former Crystal Café chef Klime Kovaceski created the original menu, and among his dishes still available is the filet mignon atop surprisingly pistachio-studded béarnaise sauce. Now there is a range of Mediterranean offerings as well, from grilled calamari steaks to mahi piccata. \$\$\$

### NORTH BEACH

**Café Prima Pasta**  
414 71st St., 305-867-0106

Who says old dogs can't learn new tricks? Opened in 1993 (with 28 seats), the Cea family's now-sprawling trattoria has added inventive chef Carlos Belon and modern menu items, including flocchi rapera (pear/cheese-filled pasta purses with truffled prosciutto cream sauce), an unlikely (soy sauce and parmesan cheese?) but luscious Italian/Japanese fusion tuna carpaccio, and fresh-fruit sorbets. But traditionalists needn't worry. All the old favorites, from the café's famed beef carpaccio to eggplant parm and pastas sauced with Argentine-Italian indulgence, are still here and still satisfying. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

**Lou's Beer Garden**  
7337 Harding Ave., 305-704-7879

"Beer garden" conjures up an image of Bavarian bratwurst, lederhosen, and oompah bands – none of which you'll find here. It's actually a hip hideaway in the New Hotel's pool-patio area, a locals' hangout with interesting eclectic fare and a perennial party atmosphere. Especially recommended: delicately pan-fried mini-crab cakes served with several house-made sauces; hefty bleu cheese burgers with Belgian-style double-cooked fries; blackened "angry shrimp" with sweet/sour sauce; fried fresh sardines. And of course much beer, a changing list of craft brews. \$\$-\$\$\$

**Tamarind Thai**  
946 Normandy Dr., 305-861-6222

When an eatery's executive chef is best-selling Thai cookbook author Vatcharin Bhumichitr, you'd expect major media hype, fancy South Beach prices, and a fancy SoBe address. Instead Bhumichitr joined forces with Day Longsombon (an old Thai school pal who'd moved to Miami) at this unpretentious, authentic (no sushi) neighborhood place. Some standout dishes here are featured in the chef's latest tome, but with Tamarind's very affordable prices, you might as well let the man's impeccably trained kitchen staff do the work for you. \$\$-\$\$\$

**The Wine Market**  
908 71st St., 305-865-6465

This rustic-chic wine shop, tapas bar, and restaurant is the sort of place that every emerging neighborhood needs. The wine stock isn't huge but the selection is thoughtful, with many bottles priced from \$10 to \$20. Take it home or pay a small corkage fee and drink on-premises over a meal centered on typical Parisian bistro entrées like steak or moules frites (the latter regularly available all-you-can-eat). If you'd prefer going the tapas bar route, highlights include a silky cognac/truffle chicken liver mousse and battered shrimp with remoulade sauce to make your own po'boy crostinis. \$\$-\$\$\$

### MIAMI SHORES

**Côte Gourmet**  
9999 NE 2nd Ave., #112, 305-754-9012

If only every Miami neighborhood could have a neighborhood restaurant like this low-priced little French jewel. The menu is mostly simple stuff: breakfast croissants, crêpe, soups, sandwiches, salads, sweets, and a few more substantial specials like a Tunisian-style brik (buttery phyllo pastry stuffed with tuna, onions, potatoes, and tomatoes) with a mesclun side salad. But everything is homemade, including all breads, and prepared with impeccable ingredients, classic French technique, and meticulous attention to detail, down to the stylish plaid ribbons that hold together the café's baguette sandwiches. \$\$-\$

**Iron Sushi**  
9432 NE 2nd Ave., 305-754-0311

With three Biscayne Corridor outlets (plus several branches elsewhere in town), this mostly take-out mini chain is fast becoming the Sushi Joint That Ate Miami. And why do Miamians eat here? Not ambiance. There isn't any. But when friends from the Pacific Northwest, where foodies know their fish, tout the seafood's freshness, we listen. There are some surprisingly imaginative makis, like the Maharaja, featuring fried shrimp and drizzles of curry Mayo. And where else will you find a stacked sushi (five assorted makis) birthday cake? \$\$-\$

**Miami Shores Country Club**  
10000 Biscayne Blvd., 305-795-2363

Formerly members-only, the restaurant/lounge facilities of this classy 1939 club are now open to the public – always, lunch and dinner. Not surprisingly, ambiance is retro and relaxed, with golf course views from both bar and indoor/outdoor dining room. The surprise is the food – some classic (steaks, club sandwiches) but other dishes quite contemporary: an Asian ahi tuna tower; a lavish candied-walnut, poached-pear, grilled chicken salad; and fresh pasta specials. Prices are phenomenal, with dinner entrées \$9 to \$17; drinks average \$3 to \$4. \$\$

**PizzaFiore**  
9540 NE 2nd Ave., 305-754-1924

Owned by Arcoub Abderrahim, who opened South Beach's original PizzaFiore way back in 1996, this café serves the kind of nostalgic, medium-thin crust, oozing-with-goey-cheese pizzas reminiscent of our childhood pies in northern NJ Sopranos' territory, except now there are options for today's toppings – sundried tomatoes, buffalo mozzarella, etc. But there's also a full menu of Italian-American classics, including antipasto salads, subs, and particularly popular, pastas. Garlic rolls are a must, but we didn't have to tell you that. \$\$-\$

### NORTH MIAMI

**Alaska Coffee Roasting Co.**  
13130 Biscayne Blvd., 786-332-4254

When people speak of the West Coast as the USA's quality coffeehouse pioneer territory, they're thinking Seattle – and then south through coastal California. North to Alaska? Not so much. But owner Michael Gesser did indeed open this hip place's parent in Fairbanks back in 1993, after years of traveling through every coffee-growing country in the world. Brews like signature smooth yet exotic Ethiopian Yirgacheffe don't even need cream or sugar, much less frappe frou-frou. All beans are house-roasted. There's solid food, too: brick-oven pizzas, salads, sandwiches, and pastries. \$\$-\$

**Bagel Bar East**  
1990 NE 123rd St., 305-895-7022

Crusty outside (even without toasting) and substantially chewy inside, the bagels here are the sort homesick ex-New Yorkers always moan are impossible to find in Miami. For those who prefer puffed-up, pillowy bagels? Forget it. Have a nice onion pocket. There's also a full menu of authentic Jewish deli specialties, including especially delicious, custom-cut – not pre-sliced – nova or lox. Super size sandwiches easily serve two, and they'll even improvise a real NJ Sloppy Joe (two meats, Swiss, coleslaw, and Russian dressing on rye) if you ask nice. \$\$

**Bagels & Co.**  
11064 Biscayne Blvd., 305-892-2435

While this place is often referred to as Guns & Bagels, one can't actually buy a gun here. The nickname refers to its location next to a firearms shop. But there's a lot of other stuff aside from bagels here, including a full range of sandwiches and wraps. Breakfast time is busy time, with banana-walnut pancakes especially popular. But what's most important is that this is one of the area's few sources of the real, New York-style water bagel: crunchy outside, challengingly chewy inside. \$

**Bulldog Barbecue/Bulldog Burger**  
15400 Biscayne Blvd., 305-940-9655

These adjacent restaurants are really one place with two dining areas, since they connect and diners can order from either menu. They also share a BBQ/burger master: Top Chef contender Howie Kleinberg, whose indoor electric smoker produces mild-tasting 'cue ranging from the expected pulled pork, ribs, brisket, and chicken to more unusual items like hot-smoked salmon. As for burgers, many feature unique ingredients such as mayo flavored like red-eye gravy, with strong coffee, or the bun of the infamous Luther: a sweet-glazed mock (holeless) Krispy Kreme donut. Costs are comparatively high, but such is the price of fame. \$\$-\$\$\$

**Cane á Sucre**  
899 NE 125th St., 305-891-0123

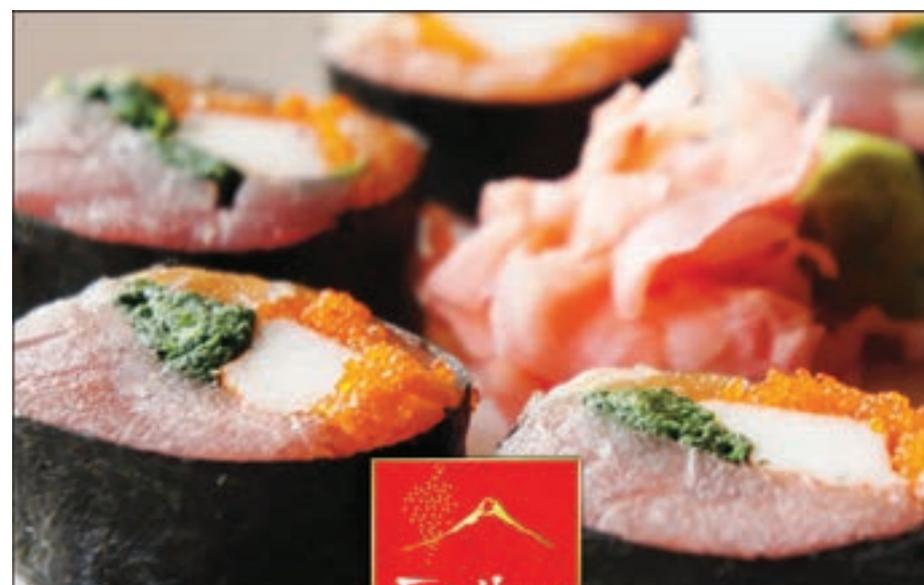
From the Vega brothers (who pioneered the Design and MiMo districts with, respectively, the original Cane A Sucre and UVA 69), this charming artisanal sandwich bar is the perfect breakfast/lunch stop before or after ingesting visual arts at



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nearby MOMA. Actually, creations like El Fig (fig confit, gorgonzola cheese, walnuts, and honey on an authentically French crisp-crust fresh-baked baguette) are art in their own right. Inventive, substantial salads, sides, daily soups, and home-made sweets (including mouthwateringly buttery croissants) complete the menu. \$-\$

### Captain Jim's Seafood

12950 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-892-2812

This market/restaurant was garnering critical acclaim even when eat-in dining was confined to a few Formica tables in front of the fish counter, owing to the freshness of its seafood, much of it from Capt. Jim Hanson's own fishing boats, which supply many top restaurants. Now there's a casual but pleasantly nautical side dining room with booths. Whether it's garlicky scampi, smoked-fish dip, grilled yellowtail or hog or mutton snapper, perfectly tenderized cracked conch or conch fritters, everything is deftly prepared and bargain-priced. \$\$

### Caminito Way

1960 NE 123rd St., 305-893-8322

Open since 1999, this bakery-café is particularly known for its European-influenced homemade Argentine pastries. So come early to pick from the widest variety of savory empanadas (plumply stuffed and admirably delicate – no leaden crusts here) or sweet facturas (Argentina's most popular breakfast items). They sell out fast. What some might not know is that despite its small size, Caminito's also crafts tasty big food: elaborate salads; hefty baguette sandwiches, like choripan sausage with chimichurri; pastas; major meat or poultry entrées. For lighter lunches, try tartas (quiches), also perfect party food. \$-\$

### Casa Mia Trattoria

1950 NE 123rd St., 305-899-2770

Tucked away, off to the side on the approach to the Broad Causeway and the beaches, this charming indoor/outdoor trattoria seems to attract mostly neighborhood regulars. But even newcomers feel like regulars after a few minutes, thanks to the staff's Italian ebullience. Menu offerings are mostly classic comfort foods with some contemporary items as well. Housemade pastas are good enough that low-carb dieters should take a break, especially for the tender gnocchi with pesto or better yet, delicate fagottini – "beggars' purses" stuffed with pears and cheese. \$\$

### Chéen-huyae

15400 Biscayne Blvd., 305-956-2808

Diners can get some Tex-Mex dishes here, if they must. But the specialty is Mayan-rooted Yucatan cuisine. So why blow bucks on burritos when one can sample Caribbean Mexico's most typical dish: cochinita pibil? Chéen's authentically succulent version of the pickle-onion-topped marinated pork dish is earthily aromatic from achote, tangy from bitter oranges, and meltingly tender from slow cooking in a banana leaf wrap. To accompany, try a lime/soy/chili-spiced michelada, also authentically Mexican, and possibly the best thing that ever happened to dark beer. \$-\$-\$

### City Slickers

807 NE 123rd St., 305-891-6565

If you hear "hoagie" and instantly think "\$5 footlong," this health-minded gourmet sub shop will be a revelation. Instead of processed proteins and sad pre-prepared toppings inside factory-produced rolls, you get freshly-baked white, grain, or sundried tomato breads generously stuffed with quality meats (including rotisserie turkeys/chickens and rare roast beef made in-house), sparkling-fresh veggies, and more than a dozen imaginative dressings. Choose a signature sub or build your own. There are also signature or DIY salads and homemade soups, plus craft beers or wines to accompany.

### Evio's Pizza & Grill

12600 Biscayne Blvd., 305-899-7699

Family-owned and operated, this indoor/outdoor pizzeria is also family-friendly, right down to the size of its NY-style pies (sold whole or by the slice), which range from large to roughly the diameter of a ferris wheel. And toppings, ranging from meat-lovers to veggie-loaded, are applied with awe-inspiring abundance. Since tastes do vary, the menu also includes a cornucopia of other crowd-pleasers: burgers (including turkey with a unique mustard-spiked cranberry sauce), entrée-size salads, burritos or quesadillas, wings, hot or cold subs and succulent self-basted lamb/beef gyros with tzatziki. \$

### Fish Fish

13488 Biscayne Blvd., 786-732-3124

Here's what makes this elegantly warm restolounge and seafood market not just an irresistible neighborhood draw but a worth-the-drive dining destination: Both local and cold-water fish and shellfish, including stone crab and lobster from owners Melvyn Franks and Rebecca Nachlas's own Florida Keys plant, that are always fresh, never frozen (except some shrimp). For home cooks, the market offers all delivered-daily catches on the menu. But don't miss chef Oscar Quezada's simple and perfect preparations, including lightly battered, crispy tempura shrimp; sophisticated fish and chips (featuring Atlantic cod, not cheapo fish); bracing ceviches; and, for carnivores, shepherd's pie topped with ethereal whipped potatoes. \$-\$-\$-\$

### Flip Burger Bar

1699 NE 123rd St., 305-741-3547

Casual-chic burger bars, everywhere in South Beach, are still rare farther north. One reason this easy-to-miss venue is a must-not-miss for North Miami locals: The hefty half-pounders on fresh brioche buns include a scrumptious patty with Gruyere, mushrooms, and onion marmalade. The Fireman is a jalapeño/chipotle scorch. There are even turkey and veggie variations. Other draws are hand-cut fries, beer-battered onion rings, a top-drawer beer list, budget-priced combo specials, conversation-friendly acoustics, and a South Beach rarity: free parking. \$-\$

### Giraffas

1821 NE 123rd St., 786-866-9007

Festooned with eye-poppingly colored panels and giraffes – subtler but everywhere – this first North American branch of a wildly popular, 30-year-old Brazilian fast/casual chain is the flagship of a planned 4000 U.S. Giraffas. Given that the steaks, especially the tender, flavorful picanha, rival those at the most upscale rodizio joints – and beat the sword-wielding grandstanders for custom cooking (because staff asks your preference) – we'd bet on giraffe domination. Overstuffed grilled sandwiches, salads, even tasty veggie options are all here, too. The cheese bread is a must. \$\$

### Happy Sushi & Thai

2224 NE 123rd St., 305-895-0165

Grab a booth at this cozy eatery, which serves all the expected Thai and sushi bar standards, including weekday lunch specials. But there are also delightful surprises, like grilled kawahagi (triggerfish) with seasoned Japanese mayonnaise. This intensely savory/sweet "Japanese home cooking" treat satisfies the same yen as beef jerky, except without pulling out your teeth. Accompanied by a bowl of rice, it's a superb lunch. For raw-fish fans, spicy, creamy salmon tartare (accompanied by hiyashi wakame seaweed) is a winner. \$-\$-\$

### Here Comes the Sun

2188 NE 123rd St., 305-893-5711

At this friendly natural foods establishment, one of Miami's first, there's a full stock of vitamins and nutritional supplements. But the place's hearty soups, large variety of entrées (including fresh fish and chicken as well as vegetarian selections), lighter bites like miso burgers with secret "sun sauce" (which would probably make old sneakers taste good), and daily specials are a tastier way to get healthy. An under-ten-but-early-bird dinner is popular with the former long-hair, now blue-hair, crowd. Frozen yogurt, fresh juices, and smoothies complete the menu. \$-\$

### Il Piccolo Café

2112 NE 123rd St., 305-893-6538

Talk about a neighborhood institution. The owners of this long-time Italian eatery remember frequent visits from Miami native Michelle Bernstein and her parents – when the celeb chef was a kid. The "piccolo" space has since expanded, but the place is still child-friendly, and portions are still prodigious. Most dishes evoke nostalgia, including our favorite white wine/lemon sauce-drenched veal piccata with capers and artichokes. There are surprises not found at old school red-sauce joints, too, like lunchtime's surprisingly tasty Cuban sandwich. \$\$

### Little Havana

12727 Biscayne Blvd. 305-899-9069

In addition to white-tablecloth ambiance, this place features live Latin entertainment and dancing, making it a good choice when diners want a night out, not just a meal. It's also a good choice for diners who don't speak Spanish, but don't worry about authenticity. Classic Cuban home-style dishes like mojo-marinated lechon asado, topped with onions, and juicy

ropa vieja are translated on the menu, not the plate, and fancier creations like pork filet in tangy tamarind sauce seem universal crowd-pleasers. \$\$\$

### Los Antojos

11099 Biscayne Blvd., 305-892-1411

If it's Sunday, it must be sancocho de gallina, Colombia's national dish. If it's Saturday, it must be ajiaco. Both are thick chicken soups, full meals in a bowl. For Colombian-cuisine novices, a bandeja paisa (sampler including rice, beans, carne asada, chicharron, eggs, sautéed sweet plantains, and an arepa corn cake) is available every day, as are antojitos – "little whims," smaller snacks like chorizo con arepa (a corn cake with Colombian sausage). And for noncarnivores there are several hefty seafood platters, made to order. \$\$

### Mama Jennie's

11720 NE 2nd Ave. 305-757-3627

For more than 35 years this beloved red-sauce joint has been drawing students and other starvation-budget diners with prodigious portions of lasagna, spaghetti and meatballs (the latter savory yet light-textured), veal marsala topped with her cakes and other mushrooms, and other Italian-American belly-busters. All pasta or meat entrées come with oil-drenched garlic rolls and either soup (hearty minestrone) or a salad (mixed greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, brined olives, and pickled peppers) that's a dinner in itself. Rustic roadhouse ambiance, notably the red leatherette booths, add to Mama's charm. \$-\$

### Pastry Is Art

12591 Biscayne Blvd., 305-640-5045

Given owner Jenny Rissonne's background as the Eden Roc's executive pastry chef, it's not surprising that her cakes and other sweet treats (like creamy one-bite truffle "lollipops") look as flawlessly sophisticated as they taste – perfect adult party fare. What the bakery's name doesn't reveal is that it's also a breakfast and lunch café, with unusual baking-oriented fare: a signature sandwich of chicken, brie, and caramelized peaches and pecans on housemade bread; quiches; pot pies; even a baked-to-order Grand Marnier soufflé. The pecan sticky buns are irresistible. \$\$

### Petit Rouge

12409 Biscayne Blvd., 305-892-7676

From the mid-1990s (with Neal's Restaurant and later with Il Migliore), local chef Neal Cooper's neighborhood-oriented Italian eateries have been crowd-pleasers. While this cute 32-seat charmer is French, it's no exception, avoiding pretense and winning fans with both classic and nouvelle bistro fare: frisée salad with lardons, poached egg, and bacon vinaigrette; truite Grenobloise (trout with lemon/caper sauce); consommé with black truffles and foie gras, covered by a buttery puff pastry dome; perfect pommes frites, and equally perfect apple or lemon tarts for dessert. \$\$\$

### Piccolo Pizza

2104 NE 123rd St., 305-893-9550

Pizzas at this spin-off from family-owned Il Piccolo impress even NYC visitors, thanks to recipes proprietor Hubert Benmoussa learned from an authentic Neapolitan pizzaiolo. Other favorites here include subs on homemade baguettes and, surprising for a pizzeria, delightfully custardy quiche (Benmoussa is part French). But it would be unthinkable to miss the pies, especially our favorite Italia: subtly sweet tomato sauce, fresh tomatoes, mozzarella, onions, plus mixed greens and uncooked prosciutto on top – both pizza and salad. There are also nicely priced catering trays of finger subs, quiche squares, pizza bites, more. \$-\$

### Rice House of Kabob

14480 Biscayne Blvd., 305-944-4899

Since 2006, South Beach's original Rice House has been serving up mountainous platters of basmati rice and Greek salad topped with Persian-style marinated/char-grilled meat, poultry, seafood, or veggie kabobs – for very little money. This branch of what is now a growing chain has the same menu (which also features wraps, for lighter eaters) and the same policy of custom-cooking kabobs, so expect fresh, not fast, food. Sides of must-o-keyar and must-o-mooseer (thick yogurt dips with herbed cukes or shallots) are must-haves. \$\$

### Steve's Pizza

12101 Biscayne Blvd., 305-891-0202

At the end of a debauched night of excess, some paper-thin designer pizza with wisps of smoked salmon (or similar fluff)

doesn't do the trick. Open till 3:00 or 4:00 a.m., Steve's has, since 1974, been serving the kind of comforting, retro pizzas people crave at that hour. As in Brooklyn, tomato sauce is sweet, with strong oregano flavor. Mozzarella is applied with abandon. Toppings are stuff that give strength: pepperoni, sausage, meatballs, onions, and peppers. \$

### Tiny Thai House

12953 Biscayne Blvd., 305-895-1646

The space is tiny. The menu, which features Thai specialties but includes sushi plus Japanese appetizers and entrées, is not. Despite the huge selection of sushi/Thai restaurant standards, though, don't overlook items harder to find in America, like "floating noodle" soup, a popular street food from Thailand's boat-based market stalls: similar in savor to Vietnamese pho, the dish contains beef, bean sprouts, and noodles heaped in umami-rich beef broth. Among the nicely priced sushi selections, the Mylo roll (tuna, salmon, crab, avocado, and cucumber, topped with tempura fish and eel sauce) is a tasty pick. Don't miss sticky rice with mango for dessert. \$

### Wong's Chinese Restaurant

12420 Biscayne Blvd., 305-891-4313

The menu reads like a textbook on how to please everyone, with food ranging from traditional Chinese to Chinese-American to just plain American. Appetizers include honey garlic chicken wings or Buffalo wings. A crab-claw starter comes with choice of pork fried rice or French fries. Seafood lovers can get shrimp chop suey, or salty pepper shrimp (authentically shell-on). And New Yorkers will find a number of dishes that are mainstays of Manhattan Szechuan menus but not common in Miami: cold sesame noodles, Hunan chicken, twice-cooked pork. \$\$

### Woody's Famous Steak Sandwich

13105 Biscayne Blvd., 305-891-1451

The griddle has been fired up since 1954 at this nostalgic hangout. New owners have made some changes, including a décor/ambiance upgrade (there's now a patio lounge, with music) and an expanded menu featuring contemporary comfort foods like fire-grilled pizzas with fresh toppings (homemade mozzarella, etc.), several salads, and veggie burgers. But time-tested road food favorites remain: big beef burgers, hot dogs, and of course, Woody's famous cheesesteak, done traditional Philly-style with shaved ribeye. You can even get Cheese Whiz. To drink, there are nine draft beers plus old-school shakes. \$\$

## NORTH MIAMI BEACH

### Blue Marlin Fish House

2500 NE 163rd St., 305-957-8822

Located inside Oleta River State Park, this casual outdoor eatery is a rare surprise for nature lovers. The featured item is still the house-smoked fish this historic venue began producing in 1938, available in three varieties: salmon, mahi mahi, and the signature blue marlin. But the smokehouse now also turns out ribs and delectable brisket. Other new additions include weekend fish fries. Entry is directly from 163rd Street, not through the main park entrance. No admission fee. \$

### Chipotle Mexican Grill

14776 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-2779

Proving that national fast-food chains don't have to be bad for either diners or the environment, Chipotle serves what the company calls "food with integrity." The fare is simple, basically tacos and big burritos: soft flour or crisp corn to fillings stuffed with chipotle-marinated steak or chicken chunks, bolder shredded beef barbacoa, or herb-scented pork carnitas. But these bites contain no evil ingredients (transfats, artificial color/flavor, antibiotics, growth hormones). And the food, while not the authentic Mex street stuff dreams are made of, is darned tasty, too. \$

### Cholo's Ceviche & Grill

1127 NE 163rd St., 305-947-3338

Don't be misled by the mini-mall location, or the relatively minimal prices (especially during lunch, when specials are under \$6). Inside, the décor is charming, and the Peruvian plates elegant in both preparation and presentation. Tops among ceviches/tiraditos is the signature Cholo's, marinated octopus and fish in a refined rocoto chili sauce with overtones both fiery and fruity. And don't miss the molded causas, whipped potato rings stuffed with avocado-garnished crab salad – altogether lighter and lovelier than the tasty but oily mashed spud constructions more oft encountered in town. \$-\$

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## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

### Christine's Roti Shop

16721 NE 6th Ave., 305-770-0434

Wraps are for wimps. At this small shop run by Christine Gouveia, originally from British Guyana, the wrapper is a far more substantial and tasty roti, a Caribbean mega-crepe made from chickpea flour. Most popular filling for the flatbread is probably jerk chicken, bone-in pieces in a spiced stew of potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions, and more chickpeas. But there are about a dozen other curries from which to choose. Take-out packages of plain roti are also available; they transform myriad leftovers into tasty, portable lunches. \$

### Duffy's Sports Grill

Intracoastal Mall  
3969 NE 163rd St., 305-760-2124

Located in a sprawling indoor/outdoor space at the Intracoastal Mall, Duffy's, part of a popular chain that identifies as the official sports grill of every major Miami team, features roughly a zillion TVs and an equally mega-size menu of accessibly Americanized, globally inspired dishes designed to please crowds: stuffed potato skins, crab Rangoon, coconut-crusted fish fingers with orange-ginger sauce, jumbo wings of many flavors. Imagine a sports-oriented Cheesecake Factory. What makes this particular Duffy's different and better? Location, location, location – fronting the Intracoastal Waterway. There's even a swimming pool with its own bar. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Empire Szechuan Gourmet of NY

3427 NE 163rd St.,  
305-949-3318

In the 1980s, Empire became the Chinese chain that swallowed Manhattan – and transformed public perceptions of Chinese food in the NY metropolitan area. Before: bland faux-Cantonese dishes. After: lighter, more fiery fare from Szechuan and other provinces. This Miami outpost does serve chop suey and other Americanized items, but don't worry. Stick with Szechuan crispy prawns, Empire's Special Duck, cold sesame noodles, or similar pleasantly spicy specialties, and you'll be a happy camper, especially if you're an ex-New Yorker. \$\$

### El Gran Inka

3155 NE 163rd St., 305-940-4910

Though diners at this upscale Peruvian eatery will find ceviches, a hefty fried-seafood jalea, and Peru's other expected traditional specialties, all presented far more elegantly than most in town, the contemporary Peruvian fusion creations are unique. Especially recommended are two dishes adapted from recipes by Peru's influential nikkei (Japanese/Creole) chef Rosita Yimura: an exquisite, delicately sauced tiradito de corvina, and for those with no fear of cholesterol, pulpo de oliva (octopus topped with rich olive sauce). \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Hanna's Gourmet Diner

13951 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-2255

When Sia and Nicole Hemmati bought the Gourmet Diner from retiring original owner Jean-Pierre Lejeune in the late 1990s, they added "Hanna's" to the name, but changed little else about this retro-looking French/American diner, a north Miami-Dade institution since 1983. Customers can get a cheeseburger or garlicky escargots, meatloaf in tomato sauce or boeuf bourguignon in red wine sauce, iceberg lettuce and tomatoes, or a mushroom and squid salad with garlic dressing. For oysters Rockefeller/tuna-melt couples from Venus and Mars, it remains the ideal dinner date destination. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Hiro Japanese Restaurant

3007 NE 163rd St., 305-948-3687

One of Miami's first sushi restaurants, Hiro retains an amusing retro-glam feel, an extensive menu of both sushi and cooked Japanese food, and late hours that make it a perennially popular after-hours snack stop. The sushi menu has few surprises, but quality is reliable. Most exceptional are the nicely priced yakitori, skewers of succulently soy-glazed and grilled meat, fish, and vegetables; the unusually large variety available of the last makes this place a good choice for vegetarians. \$\$

### Hiro's Sushi Express

17048 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-949-0776

Tiny, true, but there's more than just sushi at this mostly take-out spin-off of the pioneering Hiro. Makis are the mainstay (standard stuff like California rolls, more complex creations like multi-veg futo-maki, and a few unexpected treats like a spicy Crunch & Caliente maki), available à la carte or in value-priced individual and party combo platters. But there are also bento boxes featuring tempura, yakitori skewers, teriyaki, stir-fried veggies, and udon noodles. Another branch is now open in Miami's Upper Eastside. \$

### Heelsha

1550 NE 164th St., 305-919-8393

If unusual Bangladeshi dishes like fiery pumpkin patee (cooked with onion, green pepper, and pickled mango) or Heelsha curry (succulently spiced hilsa, Bangladeshi's sweet-fleshed national fish) seem familiar, it's because chef/owner Bithi Begum and her husband Tipu Raman once served such fare at the critically acclaimed Renaiss. Their menu's mix-and-match option allows diners to pair their choice of meat, poultry, fish, or vegetable with more than a dozen regional sauces, from familiar Indian styles to exotica like satkara, flavored with a Bangladeshi citrus reminiscent of sour orange. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Kebab Indian Restaurant

514 NE 167th St.,  
305-940-6309

Since the 1980s this restaurant, located in an unatmospheric mini strip mall but surprisingly romantic inside (especially if you grab one of the exotically draped booths) has been a popular destination for reasonably priced north Indian fare. Kormas are properly soothing and vindalooos are satisfactorily searing, but the kitchen will adjust seasonings upon request. They aim to please. Food arrives unusually fast for an Indian eatery, too. \$\$

### King Palace

330 NE 167th St. 305-949-2339

The specialties here are authentic Chinatown-style barbecue (whole ducks, roast pork strips, and more, displayed in a glass case by the door), and fresh seafood dishes, the best made with the live fish swimming in two tanks by the dining room entrance. There's also a better-than-average selection of seasonal Chinese veggies. The menu is extensive, but the best ordering strategy, since the place is usually packed with Asians, is to see what looks good on nearby tables, and point. \$\$

### Kings County Pizza

18228 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-792-9455

If your feelings about Brooklyn-style pizza have been formed by Domino's flopsy-crusted, ketchupy, cheese-floody pies, stop here to sample a slice of the real thing. Admittedly, the crusts are not those of the coal-fired classics from Brooklyn's legendary Totono's or Grimaldi's, but they're similarly medium-thin and crisp – though not like a cracker; you can fold them for neat street eating, and they taste like honest bread, not cardboard. A variety of toppings are available even on slices. There are also whole pies with varied toppings. The "large" is humongous. \$\$-\$\$

### KoneFood

387 NE 167th St., 305-705-4485

Cones contain ice cream. Kones, however, contain anything and everything edible – at least at this eatery, locally founded (though the original concept of ultimate portable convenience meals, in sealed flatbread cones, came from Italy). In their melting-pot American version, kone fillings range from breakfast items like huevos rancheros to Thai chicken, chicken curry, coconut shrimp, kones kon lechon (slow-roasted pork with mojo), various pizzas, BBQ, chicken Florentine, healthy green salads, more. There are even desserts like a flambéed apple Kone à la Normande. Authentic Belgian frites, too. \$

### Lime Fresh Mexican Grill

14831 Biscayne Blvd. 305-949-8800

Like its downtown and Midtown siblings, this Lime Fresh serves up carefully crafted Tex-Mex food. The concept is "fast casual" rather than fast food – meaning nice enough for a night out. It also means ingredients are always fresh. Seafood tacos are about as exotic as the menu gets, but the mahi mahi for fish tacos comes from a local supplier, and salsas are housemade daily. Niceties include low-carb tortillas and many Mexican beers. \$

### Laurenzo's Market Café

16385 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-945-6381

It's just a small area between the wines and the fridge counters – no potted palms, and next-to-no service in this cafeteria-style space. But when negotiating this international gourmet market's packed shelves and crowds has depleted your energies, it's a handy place to refuel with eggplant parmesan and similar Italian-American classics, housemade from old family recipes. Just a few spoonfuls of Wednesday's hearty pasta fagiolo, one of the daily soup specials, could keep a person

shopping for hours. And now that pizza master Carlo is manning the wood-fired oven, you can sample the thinnest, crispiest pies outside Napoli. \$-\$\$

### Little Saigon

16752 N. Miami Ave., 305-653-3377

This is Miami's oldest traditional Vietnamese restaurant, but it's still packed most weekend nights. So even the place's biggest negative – its hole-in-the-wall atmosphere, not encouraging of lingering visits – becomes a plus since it ensures fast turnover. Chef/owner Lily Tao is typically in the kitchen, crafting green papaya salad, flavorful beef noodle pho (served with greens, herbs, and condiments that make it just a soup but a whole ceremony), and many other Vietnamese classics. The menu is humongous. \$-\$\$

### The Melting Pot

15700 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-2228

For 1950s and 1960s college students, fondue pots were standard dorm accessories. These days, however, branches of this chain are generally the only places to go for this eating experience. Start with a wine-enriched four-cheese fondue; proceed to an entrée with meat or seafood, plus choice of cooking potion (herbed wine, bouillon, or oil); finish with fruits and cakes dipped in melted chocolate. Fondue etiquette dictates that diners who drop a skewer in the pot must kiss all other table companions, so go with those you love. \$\$\$

### Oishi Thai

14841 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-4338

At this stylish Thai/sushi spot, try the menu of specials, many of which clearly reflect the young chef's fanatical devotion to fresh fish, as well as the time he spent in the kitchen of Knob: broiled miso-marinated black cod; rock shrimp tempura with creamy sauce; even Nobu Matsuhisa's "new style sashimi" (slightly surface-seared by drizzles of hot olive and sesame oil). The specials menu includes some Thai-inspired creations, too, such as veal massaman curry, Chilean sea bass curry, and sizzling filet mignon with basil sauce. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Panya Thai

520 NE 167th St., 305-945-8566

Unlike authentic Chinese cuisine, there's no shortage of genuine Thai food in and around Miami. But Panya's chef/owner, a Bangkok native, offers numerous regional and/or rare dishes not found elsewhere. Plus he doesn't automatically curtail the heat or sweetness levels to please Americans. Among the most intriguing: moo khem phad wan (chewy deep-fried seasoned pork strips with fiery tamarind dip, accompanied by crisp green papaya salad); broad rice noodles stir-fried with eye-opening chili/garlic sauce and fresh Thai basil; and chili-topped Diamond Duck in tangy tamarind sauce. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Paquito's

16265 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-5027

From the outside, this strip-mall Mexican eatery couldn't be easier to overlook. Inside, however, its festivity is impossible to resist. Every inch of wall space seems to be covered with South of the Border knickknacks. And if the kitschy décor alone doesn't cheer you, the quickly arriving basket of fresh (not packaged) taco chips, or the mariachi band, or the knockout margaritas will. Food ranges from Tex-Mex burritos and a party-size fajita platter to authentic Mexican moles and harder-to-find traditional preparations like albóndigas – spicy, ultra-savory meatballs. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Sang's Chinese Restaurant

1925 NE 163rd St., 305-947-7076

Sang's has three menus. The pink menu is Americanized Chinese food, from chop suey to honey garlic chicken. The white menu permits the chef to show off his authentic Chinese fare: salt and pepper prawns, rich beef/turnip casserole, tender salt-baked chicken, even esoterica like abalone with sea cucumber. The extensive third menu offers dim sum, served until 4:00 p.m. A live tank allows seasonal seafood dishes like lobster with ginger and scallion. Recently installed: a Chinese barbecue case, displaying savory items like crispy pork with crackling attached. \$\$\$

### Shing Wang Vegetarian, Isee & Tea House

237 NE 167th St., 305-654-4008

At this unique, mostly Taiwanese eatery, all seafood, poultry, and meats used to be skillfully crafted and delicious vegetarian imitations. These are still here, plus there's now a wider choice of dishes, some featuring real meat. Try the authentic-tasting

Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches (available with a variety of meat and mock-meat fillings), Bubble tea is the must-not-miss drink. The cold, refreshing boba comes in numerous flavors, all supplemented with signature black tapioca balls that, sipped through straws, are a guaranteed giggle. \$

### Siam Square

54 NE 167th St., 305-944-9697

Open until 1:00 a.m. every day except Sunday (when it closes at midnight), this relatively new addition to North Miami Beach's "Chinatown" strip has become a popular late-night gathering spot for chefs from other Asian restaurants. And why not? The food is fresh, nicely presented, and reasonably priced. The kitchen staff is willing to customize dishes upon request, and the serving staff is reliably fast. Perhaps most important, karaoke equipment is in place when the mood strikes. \$\$\$

### Slices Pizza & Pasta

13750 Biscayne Blvd., 305-949-5684

While pizza by the slice is common street food in every city in the USA, this informal Italian eatery offers a variation particularly appropriate to Latin American-influenced Miami: slices served rodizio-style. Brazil's traditional rodizio restaurants feature many different grilled meats, served tableside by a continuing parade of waiters till diners cry uncle. Here the concept is the same, with dozens of varieties of pizza (plus several pastas) replacing the beef. \$\$

### Sushi House

15911 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-6002

In terms of décor drama, this sushi spot seems to have taken its cue from Philippe Starck: sheer floor-to-ceiling drapes, for starters. The sushi list, too, is over the top, featuring monster makis like the Cubbie Comfort: spicy tuna, soft-shell crab, shrimp and eel tempura, plus avocado, jalapeños, and cilantro, topped with not one but three sauces: wasabi, teriyaki, and spicy Mayo. Hawaiian King Crab contains unprecedented ingredients like tomatoes, green peppers, and pineapple. Boutique wines, artisan sakes, and cocktails are as exotic as the cuisine. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Sushi Sake

13551 Biscayne Blvd., 305-947-4242

Chic Asian-accented décor, video screens, 99-cent drink deals, and late-night hours make this hip hangout not just a sushi bar but sort of a neighborhood bar, too. That said, the sushi is impressive, mainly because seafood is delivered daily and all except the shrimp is fresh, not frozen (as is customary at most Miami sushi places). Also notable: All sauces are house-made. Cooked makis like a crunch-topped Miami Heat are most popular, but it's as sashimi that the fish's freshness truly shines. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Tania's Table

18685 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-932-9425

A location at the tail end of a tiny, tired-looking strip mall makes this weekday lunch-only kosher eatery easy to miss. But the cute bistro, an extension of chef Tania Sigal's catering company, is well worth seeking for its unusually varied daily-changing menus – not just familiar Eastern European-derived dishes (chicken matzoh ball soup, blintzes, etc.) but numerous Latin American specialties (zesty ropa vieja), Asian-influenced items (Thai chicken/noodle salad), lightened universal Ladies-Who-Lunch classics (custardy quiches, grilled trout with mustard sauce), and homemade baked goods. \$\$

### Tuna's

17850 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-932-0630

www.tunasrawbarandgrille.com  
The reincarnated Tuna's has gained new owners, a new name, a dazzling outdoor bar and dining area, and a new chef, Rolf Fellhauer, who spent 28 years at the famed La Paloma. He has added his touch to the menu, with delicacies such as Oysters Moscow, mussels Chardonnay, and Grouper Brittany. Traditional house favorites remain, and the emphasis is still on fresh fish from local waters. Open daily till 2:00 a.m., the place can get rather festive after midnight, but since the kitchen is open till closing, Tuna's draws a serious late-night dining crowd, too. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Vegetarian Restaurant by Hakin

73 NE 167th St., 305-405-6346

Too often purist vegetarian food is unskillfully crafted bland stuff, spiced with little but sanctimonious intent. Not at this modest-looking vegan (dairy-free vegetarian) restaurant and

## Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

smoothie bar. Dishes from breakfast's blueberry-packed pancakes to Caribbean vegetable stews sparkle with vivid flavors. Especially impressive: mock meat (and fake fish) wheat-gluten items that beat many carnivorous competitors. Skeptical? Rightly. But we taste-tested a "Philly cheese steak" sandwich on the toughest of critics – an inflexibly burger-crazy six-year-old. She cleaned her plate. \$\$

### Yakko-San

**3881 NE 163rd. St. (Intracoastal Mall), 305-947-0064**  
After sushi chefs close up their own restaurants for the night, many come here for a rare taste of Japanese home cooking, served in grazing portions. Try glistening-fresh strips of raw tuna can be had in maguro neta – mixed with scallions and dressed with habit-forming honey-miso mustard sauce. Other favorites include goma ae (wilted spinach, chilled and dressed in sesame sauce), garlic stem and beef (mild young shoots flash-fried with tender steak bits), or perhaps just-caught grouper with hot/sweet/tangy chili sauce. Open till around 3:00 a.m. \$\$

## BAY HARBOR ISLANDS

**Asia Bay Bistro**  
1007 Kane Concourse  
305-861-2222

As in Japan's most refined restaurants, artful presentation is stunning at this Japanese/Thai gem. And though the voluminous menu sports all the familiar favorites from both nations, the Japanese-inspired small plates will please diners seeking something different. Try jalapeño-sauced hamachi sashimi; toro with enoki mushrooms, bracing ooba (shiso), tobiko caviar, and a sauce almost like beurre blanc; rock shrimp/shitake tempura with a delicate salad; elegant salmon tartare with a mix-in quail egg. And spicy, mayo-dressed tuna rock makis are universal crowd-pleasers. \$\$\$

### Betto's Ristorante Italiano

**1009 Kane Concourse, 305-861-8166**  
After roughly 25 years as Caffè Da Vinci, this romantic remodeled, renamed space is now managed by Betto Di Carlo, also a 25-year Italian cuisine veteran (as former owner/effusively charming host of Surfside's neighborhood favorite Café Ragazzi). Best make reservations. Though off the tourist track, the place draws hungry hordes for homemade pastas like pappardelle ai porcini (toothsome wide noodles with fresh mushrooms). Veal piccata, lightly floured and sautéed medallions with a caper-studded lemon white wine sauce, and thicker mozzarella-stuffed chops are also popular. \$\$\$

### Le Pine

**1052 Kane Concourse, 305-861-1059**  
This upscale Lebanese restaurant serves dishes with the sort of understated sophistication that makes clear why Beirut was called the Paris of the East. You'll find familiar Middle Eastern favorites, but many have refinements that lift them above average: pita that's housemade, charmingly fluffy when warm from the oven; falafel incorporating flavorful fava beans with the usual ground chickpeas. Especially appealing are more uncommon items like crisp-fried cauliflower with tahini, feteh (a chickpea casserole "iced" with thick yogurt), and buttery cheese/herb-filled sambusak pastries. Finish exotically with a hookah. \$\$-\$\$\$

**Open Kitchen**  
1071 95th St.,  
305-865-0090

If we were on Death Row, choosing a last meal, this very chef-centered lunchroom/market's PBLT (a BLT sandwich with melt-in-your-mouth pork belly substituting for regular bacon) would be a strong contender. Co-owners Sandra Stefani (ex-Casa Toscana chef/owner) and Ines Chattas (ex-Icebox Café GM) have combined their backgrounds to create a global gourmet oasis with a menu ranging from light quiches and imaginative salads to hefty balsamic/tomato-glazed short ribs or daily pasta specials (like wild boar-stuffed ravioli). Also featured: artisan grocery products, and Stefani's famous interactive cooking class/wine dinners. \$\$-\$\$\$

### The Palm

**9650 E. Bay Harbor Dr.,  
305-868-7256**  
It was 1930s journalists, legend has it, who transformed

NYC's original Palm from Italian restaurant to bastion of beef. Owners would run out to the butcher for huge steaks to satisfy the hardboiled scribes. So our perennial pick here is nostalgic: steak à la ston – juicy, butter-doused slices on toast, topped with sautéed onions and pimientos. This classic (whose carb components make it satisfying without à la carte sides, and hence a relative bargain) isn't on the menu anymore, but cooks will prepare it on request. \$\$\$\$

## AVENTURA / HALLANDALE

**Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza**  
17901 Biscayne Blvd., 305-830-2625

When people rave about New York pizzas' superiority, they don't just mean thin crusts. They mean the kind of airy, abundantly burn-bubbled, uniquely flavorful crusts that can only be consistently produced by a traditional coal (not wood) oven – like those at Anthony's, which began with one Fort Lauderdale pizzeria in 2002 and now has roughly 30 locations. Quality toppings, though limited, hit all the major food groups, from prosciutto to kalamata olives. There are salads, too, but the sausage and garlic-sautéed broccoli rabe pie is a tastier green vegetable. \$\$

**Bagel Cove Restaurant & Deli**  
19003 Biscayne Blvd. 305-935-4029

One word: flagels. And no, that's not a typo. Rather these crusty, flattened specimens (poppy seed or sesame seed) are the ultimate bagel/soft pretzel hybrid – and a specialty at this bustling Jewish bakery/deli, which, since 1988, opens at 6:30 a.m. – typically selling out of flagels in a couple of hours. Since you're up early anyway, sample elaborately garnished breakfast specials, including unusually flavorful homemade corned beef hash and eggs. For the rest of the day, multitudes of mavens devour every other delectable deli specialty known to humankind. \$\$

### BagelWorks

**18729 Biscayne Blvd., 305-937-7727**  
Hard as it is for old-time NYC expats to believe, there's evidently a younger generation that doesn't equate the Jewish deli experience with loudmouthed servers and the smell of 75 years of fermenting pickle juice in the flooring. This cleanly contemporary place attracts this younger generation with the full range of classics, including many varieties of hand-sliced smoked fish, but also healthy options, most notably a wide array of substantial salads with grilled protein add-ons. Bagels, while machine-made rather than hand-rolled, are freshly baked all day. \$\$

### Blu Sushi

**600 Silks Run Rod., 954-744-4398**  
Even hard-core sushi-bar addicts must admit that many such establishments suffer from a certain sameness. Not Blu. At this restorlounge in the Village at Gulfstream Park, part of a mini-chain originating in southwest Florida, the specialty makis are outdone in outrageousness only by extravagant cocktails. Yes, there are California rolls. But why be bored when you have an alternative like Kin-SO: tempura king crab salad, tuna, and avocado with scallions, smelt roe, and tempura flakes, plus mayo and sweet eel sauce. \$\$\$

### Bourbon Steak

**19999 W. Country Club Dr., 786-279-0658**  
(Fairmont Hotel, Turnberry Resort)  
At Bourbon Steak, a venture in the exploding restaurant empire of chef Michael Mina, a multiple James Beard award winner, steakhouse fare is just where the fare starts. There are also Mina's ingenious signature dishes, like an elegant deconstructed lobster/baby vegetable pot pie, a raw bar, and enough delectable vegetable/seafood starters and sides for noncarnivores to assemble a happy meal. But don't neglect the steak – flavorful dry-aged Angus, 100-percent Wagyu American "Kobe," swoonworthy grade A5 Japanese Kobe, and butter-poached prime rib, all cooked to perfection. \$\$\$\$

### BurgerFi

**18139 Biscayne Blvd., 305-466-0350**  
It's not surprising that this Florida-based "better burger" franchise is one of America's fastest-growing. With décor that's relaxing retro yet futuristically earth-friendly (think recycled Coke bottle chairs), beverages ranging from milkshakes to craft beers, and sourced hormone/antibiotic-free, grass-fed

Angus burgers on branded buns, for prices rivaling those for fast-food junkburgers, what's not to love? There are also vegetarian quinoa burgers or Kobe dogs, plus "accessories" including hand-cut fries, killer crisp-battered onion rings, freshly made, all-natural frozen custard, and toppings galore. \$

### Cadillac Ranch

**Village at Gulfstream Park**  
921 Silks Run Rd. #1615, 954-456-1031  
It's hard to decide if the most fun interpretation of beef here is the weekend prime rib dinner special (with two sides and a meat hunk hefty enough for sandwiches the next day) or the mechanical bull. Party like it's 1980 at this all-American restorlounge/sports bar, which includes two outdoor patios with fire pits and, sometimes, live rootsy music. If you miss out on the roast beef (it goes fast), there are burgers, steaks, meal-size salads, and classic bar bites. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Fresko

**19048 NE 29th Ave., 786-272-3737**  
Forget thick, dough-wrapped potato knishes and blintzes slathered with sour cream. As its name suggests, this kosher dairy eatery eschews the starch/sugar-laden traditional favorites for salads, smoothies, and similar healthy fare as casual, clean, and contemporary as the restaurant's décor. Asian-influenced items, like wakame-topped tuna tartare with pineapple chutney, are particularly appealing, while those craving classic combinations like smoked salmon and cream cheese can enjoy them on a light-crust designer pizza. To drink, smoothies are supplemented by refreshing herbal infusions like green lemonade (with mint and basil). \$\$

### Fuji Hana

**2775 NE 187th St., Suite #1, 305-932-8080**  
A people-pleasing menu of typical Thai and Japanese dishes, plus some appealing contemporary creations (like the Spicy Crunchy Tuna Roll, an inside-out tuna/avocado/tempura maki, topped with more tuna and served with a luscious creamy cilantro sauce) has made this eatery a longtime favorite. But vegetarians – for whom seafood-based condiments can make Asian foods a minefield – might want to add the place to their "worth a special drive" list, thanks to chefs' winning ways with tofu and all-around accommodation to veg-only diets. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Kampai

**3575 NE 207th St., 305-931-6410**  
At this longtime neighborhood favorite Japanese/Thai restaurant, many come just for the slightly pricy but very generous sushi specialties. Most makis are cooked, but for raw-fish fans the tempura-flake-topped crunchy tuna/avocado roll with spicy mayo, and tuna both inside and out, is a people-pleaser. Don't neglect Thai specialties, though, especially red and green curries customizable as to heat (mild, medium, hot, and authentic "Thai hot"). And for a bargain light lunch, try tonjiru, miso soup jazzed up with veggies and pork. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Mo's Bagels & Deli

**2780 NE 187th St., 305-936-8555**  
While the term "old school" is used a lot to describe this spacious (160-seat) establishment, it actually opened in 1995. It just so evokes the classic NY delis we left behind that it seems to have been here forever. Example: Lox and nova aren't pallid, prepackaged fish, but custom-sliced from whole slabs. And bagels are hand-rolled, chewy champions, not those machine-made puffy posers. As complimentary pastry bites suggest, and the massive size of the succulent, sufficiently fatty pastrami sandwiches confirm, generous Jewish Mo(m) spirit shines here. \$\$

### Mr. Chef's Fine Chinese Cuisine & Bar

**18800 NE 29th Ave. #10, 786-787-9030**  
Considering our county's dearth of authentic Chinese food, this stylish eatery is heaven-sent for Aventura residents. Owners Jin Xiang Chen and Shu Ming (a.k.a. Mr. Chef) come from China's southern seacoast province of Guangdong (Canton). But you'll find no gloppily sauced, Americanized-Cantonese chop sues here. Cooking is properly light-handed, and seafood specialties shine (try the spicy/crispy salt and pepper shrimp). For adventurers, there's a cold jellyfish starter. Even timid taste buds can't resist tender fried shrimp balls described this way: "With crispy adorable fringy outfit." \$\$-\$\$\$

### Pilar

**20475 Biscayne Blvd. 305-937-2777**  
Chef/owner Scott Fredel previously worked for Norman Van Aken and Mark Militello. He has been executive chef at Rumi, and cooked at NYC's James Beard House. Armed with those impressive credentials, Fredel and his wife launched Pilar (named for Hemingway's boat) aiming to prove that top restaurants can be affordable. Consider it proven. Florida-bean-style seafood is the specialty: fresh hearts of palm slab and Caribbean curry sauce, rock shrimp spring rolls with sweet soy glaze, yellowtail snapper with tomato-herb vinaigrette. Forget its strip-mall location. The restaurant itself is elegant. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Sushi Siam

**19575 Biscayne Blvd. 305-932-8955**  
(See Miami / Upper Eastside listing)

## SUNNY ISLES BEACH

### Alba

**17315 Collins Ave., 786-923-9305**  
From bad-boy celeb chef Ralph Pagano, Sole resort's seaside Italian/Italian-American eatery has an irreverent retro Rat Pack vibe and a menu featuring "naked ravioli" from the Gnudl Bar, fresh seafood, homemade pastas, classic and contemporary pizzas, and old school "red sauce joint" entrées, some upscaled. (When lobster Française is available, why settle for chicken?) Almond-sage butter-sauced butternut squash gnudi is a best bet. And meals end with another best bet: the "Vinny D Split," a game enabling tables to win their meals for free. \$\$\$\$

### Chef Philip Ho

**16850 Collins Ave., 305-974-0338**  
Deep-pocketed diners who ate at the Setai when Jonathan

Wright was executive chef already know chef Ho's work. His dazzling dim sum were the menu's highlight. Now they're affordable for all. Dumplings (chive and shrimp, green tea duck, truffle-spiked scallop, more) have skins delicate enough to see through; open shrimp dumplings with dried scallops are almost flower-like in appearance; steamed cheung fan (rice noodle crêpes) rolled around Chinese crullers are simply sinful, as are flaky-crust egg custard tarts. And the regular menu measures up to the small plates. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Copper Chimney

**18090 Collins Ave., 305-974-0075**  
At this family-owned (and kid-friendly), white-tablecloth Indian restaurant, prices are more upscale than average, but so is the food's elegant presentation – plus features like a full bar, live Bollywood/belly dancing on weekends, and, among familiar North Indian fare, dishes blending contemporary touches with traditional tastes. Especially enjoyable: starters inspired by street snacks, like bikaneri chaat (fried gram flour crisps, chickpeas, and yogurt) served with two chutneys; anything featuring paneer cheese, from classic spinach/cheese palak paneer to creative khazas-e-lazzat (sundried tomato-stuffed paneer/potato dumplings in smooth cream sauce). \$\$\$

### Epicure Gourmet Market & Café

**17190 Collins Ave., 305-947-4581**  
Who even knew that the late Rascal House had an ocean view? Diners may have to eat standing up to glimpse water over the dunes from the panoramic café windows of the gourmet market that replaced the Rascal, but you know you're on a tropical beach, not Brighton Beach. The big, bright café's menu, more global diner than Jewish deli, includes daily specials ranging from spa-grilled chicken to homemade Italian sausage and peppers. But it's worth seeking out items that made South Beach's original Epicure famous: sandwiches featuring housemade rare roast beef; shrimp or chunky smoked whitefish salads; fresh baked goods. \$\$\$

### The H Restaurant

**17608 Collins Ave., 305-931-9106**  
This friendly, family-owned bistro is the sort of homeaway-from-home found every few blocks in France – here Gerard and Karin Herrison, plus chef son Julien, formerly had a restaurant – but they're rarely found in South Florida. Burgers, et al., are available, but with garlicky escargots, a savory/sweet-dressed salad of duck confit atop frisée, pan-seared foie gras with port/raspberry sauce, fish with an impeccable lemon beurre blanc, and a satisfying steak/frites (with peppery cognac cream sauce). We'd leave the American stuff to the kids. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

### Il Mulino New York

**17875 Collins Ave., 305-466-9191**  
If too much is not enough for you, this majority upscale Italian-American place, an offshoot of the famed NYC original, is your restaurant. For starters, diners receive enough freebie food – fried zucchini coins, salami, bruschetta with varying toppings, a wedge of quality parmigiano, garlic bread – that ordering off the menu seems superfluous. But mushroom raviolis in truffle cream sauce are irresistible, and perfectly tenderized veal parmesan, the size of a large pizza, makes a great take-out dinner...for the next week. \$\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Kitchen 305

**16701 Collins Ave., 305-749-2110**  
Offering eclectic American fare, this resort restaurant room, despite its contemporary open kitchen, has the retro-glam look of a renovated discotheque – which is what it was. In fact, it's still as much lounge as eatery, so it's best to arrive early if you want a relatively DJ-free eating experience. A seductive mango-papaya BBQ sauce makes ribs a tasty choice any night, but most local diners in the know come on nights when the restaurant features irresistibly priced seasonal seafood specials (all-you-can-eat stone crabs one night, lobster on another). A spacious dining counter overlooking the cooks makes the Kitchen a comfortable spot for singles. \$\$\$

### Piazzetta

**17875 Collins Ave., 305-918-6816**  
You can't help feeling optimistic about a tourist town's food scene when its resort restaurants, which generally walk the middle of the road, get creative. And it doesn't get much more creative than this stylish restaurant and Italian market, which bills itself as a trip to an Italian-inspired "little market square," but which, along with artisanal salumi plus pizzas and pastas, serves sushi. Particularly tasty: the native Neapolitan pizza chef's truffled tagliatelle and mushroom pies; meltingly tender braised short ribs; an impeccable market-driven meat and cheese platter. \$\$\$

### Timo

**17624 Collins Ave., 305-936-1008**  
Since opening in 2003, the inventive yet clean and unfussy Italian/Mediterranean-inspired seasonal food at this hot spot, created by chef/owner Tim Andriola (at the time best known for his stints at Chef Allen's and Mark's South Beach), has been garnering local and national raves. Don't bother reading them. Andriola's dishes speak for themselves: a salad of crisp oysters atop frisée, cannelloni bean, and pancetta; foie gras crostini with a subtle caramelized orange sauce; a blue crab ravioli with toasted pignolias and brown butter; or a wood-oven three-cheese "white" pizza. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

### Werner Staub's Peppermill

**350 Bayview Dr., 305-466-2016**  
It'll likely be years until diners stop instinctively heading for the tropic-alpine chalet that formerly housed the Peppermill at the Waterways in Aventura. But this new indoor/outdoor space's bay views are much more spectacular. And the food is the same unique old-school stuff. Seafood is featured, and while there are contemporary preparations, you can't resist hard-to-find retro dishes like imported Dover sole almondine, Swiss-style poached trout with champagne-shallot sauce, an elaborate steak tartar, and for dessert, peach Melba or strawberries Romanoff. \$\$\$



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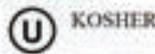
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**DESIGN DISTRICT: 3801 N MIAMI AVE  
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4,211 SF signalized corner building available for sale. This property will fit a variety of uses including retail, restaurant, or an array of mixed uses. This property allows up to +/- 129,000 SF of gross development and buildings up to 20 stories high.

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**LITTLE RIVER: 7205 NE 4 AVE RAIL 71  
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Rail 71 is a 120,654 SF existing multi-bay creative flex warehouse sitting on 3.69 acres of prime industrial land, neighboring the FEC.

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**LITTLE RIVER: 7251 NE 2 AVE JUNCTION LOFTS  
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One of a kind, newly renovated mixed-use commercial flex space building, consisting of 14 individual spaces, now for sale. Building is currently 100% occupied with turn-key income in place.

**ALFREDO RIASCOS | 305 571 9991  
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**MIDTOWN: 3400 NE 2 AVE  
FOR SALE | \$1.89 M**

Tremendous investment opportunity w/ high traffic counts and great visibility. Existing 2,310 SF building currently leased to Domino's Pizza. Great opportunity for redevelopment with future rental upside.

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**MIDTOWN: 51 NW 36 ST  
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The 51 Building is a well located, free standing and highly visible creative space. Ideally suited for a wide range of retail, showroom, or flex uses. Unique features include a bi-level, open plan format with 5,000 SF on level one and 1,250 SF on level two, opening up to a 3,250 SF roof top patio deck.

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