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December 18 - 20	December 19	December 18 - 24	Dec 30 - Jan 4	January 4	January 9
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South Florida Distributors

PRINTING

Stuart Web, Inc.
www.stuartweb.com

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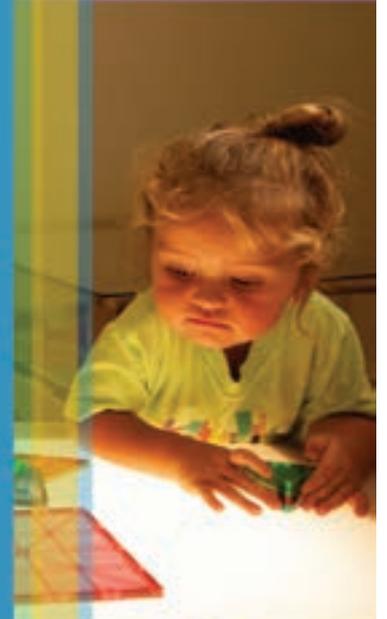
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Commentary: LETTERS

Watson Island's Criminals, Crackpots, and Crack Pipes

I'm pleased to see that John Dorschner is now writing for *Biscayne Times* ("For the Birds: Watson Island Is Where Developer's Dreams Turn to Dust," October 2014). He's a great reporter and writer, and it's a pleasure to see his byline following his retirement from the *Herald*, especially on such a good story as the Chaos on the Causeway, a.k.a. Watson Island.

Makes me mad as hell, the criminal behavior on the part of city officials kowtowing to moneybags developers whose plans sound like they come out of crack pipes. Please write follow-ups to this story. It'd even be a great book.

The city should kick all the developers, seaplane terminals, etc., off the island, rehire that horticulturist [Jeff Shimonski] who saved 800 tons of compost over the years (now, that's a man who knows the value of guano), and designate the island as a jungle park again. Nonprofit. Free admission, except to Flagstone, which will have to start repaying its back rent before it can even use the causeway.

Please do *not* print my name. My spouse works for the damn city!

*Name Withheld by Request
Miami*

Editor's note: An update to "For the Birds" is available at John Dorschner's website, Miami Web News. Go to miamiwebnews.blogspot.com.

Go Ahead, Just Try Begging Publix

Thank you so very much for Olga Figueroa's well-written article on plastic supermarket bags ("Paper, Plastic...or Profits?" October 2014). I have been begging Publix for no plastic bags. I've begged for paper bags at our Publix store on 50th and Biscayne. I have also written to their main office in Lakeland. Yet their only alternative is still plastic — or no alternative at all.

Thank you, *Biscayne Times*. You made my day

Since we moved from a house to a condo in Morningside Flats, we do not receive your newspaper anymore, but thanks to the Internet, I can still read your great articles Thanks again.

*Ysée Gaudel-Eisel
Miami*

Publix Needs to Inflict Some Pain for Some Gain

Don't blame Publix for the plastic bag debacle or for not giving away recyclable

bags for free. Reusable bags, given away in bulk, are expensive. Even if you gave the bags to the customers, I would bet that not even ten percent would bring them back, and that a lot would end up in the trash.

I wasn't even aware that Publix touts environmental awareness and green initiatives as one of its core values, until I Googled for it after reading your article. Its website has a link to <http://sustainability.public.com> tucked away in the "Corporate" section on the bottom of the page.

I agree that promotions where people can buy bags at a discount don't work. Au contraire — customers' behavior can only be changed if something directly affects their pocketbooks.

That's what German supermarkets (in my home country) learned many years ago. There you will be charged for each bag you use. You grab bags during the checkout process, put them on the belt with your groceries, and the cashier rings them up.

Let Publix *make* money selling the plastic bags. Reconfiguring checkout lanes and starting a negative PR campaign ("From now on, you will pay for your bags) — the potential loss in customer share would be the real cost.

Now *that* would be a commitment. If Publix took the lead in this kind of initiative, other chains might follow.

*Nicola Meyer
The Palms Hotel & Spa
Miami Beach*

My Plastic Shopping Bags? They Go Down the Chute!

I'm writing in response to "Paper, Plastic... or Profits?" Although I use a cloth reusable shopping bag when possible, like many people, I live in a high-rise building and repurpose the plastic shopping bags for the disposing of trash.

By eliminating plastic shopping bags, I will need to purchase plastic trash bags. I don't see any net benefit.

*Gilbert Schwartz
Aventura*

We Love Word Nerds!

I enjoyed seeing Adam Schachner's column about Freebee shuttle service ("Freebee's Road Trip," October 2014). I love topics like sustainability, online networking, and new urbanism. In fact, I specialize in sustainability education and have devoted much of my time since 2008 primarily to LEED education. I'm also a

Continued on page 16

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Commentary: LETTERS

Letters

Continued from page 12

member of the U.S. Green Building Council Miami.

I'm noting this because I feel the need to point out a usage error in Adam's story. I connected Jared Jacobs, the "eco coordinator" for Freebee, with the people at 600 Brickell World Plaza, which is Miami's first platinum-level, LEED-certified office building. Two years, in fact, ago I held a two-day LEED class at 600 Brickell. Just wanted to clarify that the building is LEED-certified, not LEED-sponsored, as written in the story.

Sorry for being such a word nerd, but there's really no such thing as LEED-sponsored, at least that I know of. The Green Building Council, the organization that created the LEED green building rating system, doesn't really sponsor projects, per se. And LEED is simply a rating system for distinguishing green buildings and spaces.

Keep up the great work!

*Greg Hamra
Miami*

It May Not Be Hate Speech, but It's Definitely Bigotry

I will point out the glaringly obvious hole in Jerome Hurtak's letter to the editor ("The Grave Matter of My Conscience," October 2014) regarding the gay marriage resolution in Miami Shores.

His entire indictment of homosexual behavior revolves around the idea of conception, which he terms "the natural object" of sexuality. A heterosexual couple who marry but have no intention of procreating shuns this "natural object" no less than a homosexual couple.

Despite this clear parallel, the letter writer (and most religious opponents of gay marriage) never mentions opposition to no-child heterosexual marriages. That omission underscores what has always seemed self-evident to me. There is no logical reason to criticize homosexual behavior. The criticism always stems from fear and/or loathing of the unknown or from a literal adherence to one passage or several passages in some religious book.

If Mr. Hurtak had limited his criticism to questioning why a local village government needs to spend time passing symbolic resolutions that get resolved at the state or federal level, I would have been okay. Instead he launched into an anti-homosexual "proof" that only proved he finds

homosexuals to be inferior because they are not "life-affirming" or "natural."

That might not constitute hate speech, but it definitely fulfills the requirements for bigotry.

*Peter Konen
Miami Shores*

Jerome, I'm Happier Not Knowing What You Believe

In response to Jerome Hurtak's letter, I would say this: I don't believe in "god." I do, however, believe in marriage.

And whether I believe in "god" or not, I believe that people should be allowed to marry each other because that's the commitment they want to make to each other — even if they don't want to have children and even if they can't.

Because I don't believe in "god" or in the idea that the purpose of marriage is procreation, I also don't expect people who are married to crank out as many children as they can to satisfy some imagined species-promoting aim.

Further, I believe that what I believe is none of your business, Mr. Hurtak, and it should not control or even influence your behavior. You don't even need to *know* what I believe.

The fact that I don't believe in "god" shouldn't mean *you* can't go to church, and it certainly doesn't mean I can insist that you have a secular wedding.

As you can probably imagine, I also believe that what you believe is none of my business, and it should not control or even influence my behavior. Not only do I *not* need to know what you believe, I'm happier not knowing.

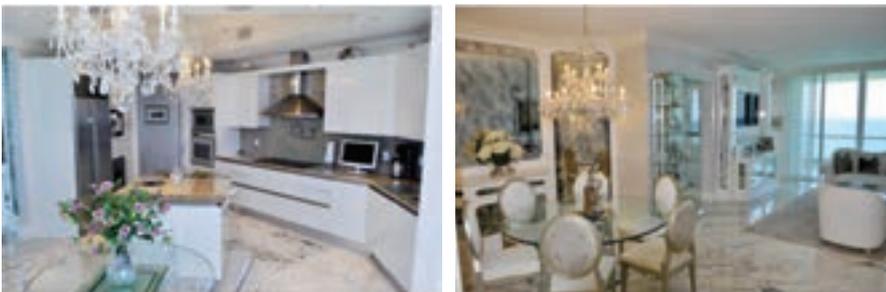
You're quite right, however, to mention what your "faith teaches." That's exactly what it is: your faith. It isn't my faith, and it isn't the faith of a lot of other people. Have you ever heard the phrase "it's a free country"? It is for you, and it is for the rest of us.

So discuss your feelings about homosexuality with your religious friends. Don't spew them in the *Biscayne Times*. Your religious friends are interested to hear them. The rest of us are not.

I am not, by the way, a homosexual. Not that it's any of your business.

I do agree with you about one thing: the nonbinding Village Council resolution had "nothing to do with the business of Miami Shores." It had only to do with the mutual respect and decency of the people who live there.

*Commissioner Fred Jonas
Biscayne Park*



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You Voted, Right? (Not That Right!)

Tallahassee gridlock, no to the AG, and two secessionist tales

By Jack King
BT Contributor

I hope that by the time you've read this column, you will have voted. Sadly, I'm not sure that it really makes much of a difference who you voted for.

At the national level, no matter who wins the most seats in Congress, there will still be gridlock for the next two years. Republicans, the party of old white men, are not dying off fast enough. Two years from now, though?

At the state level we have a bizarre situation, even for Florida. With Rick Scott running for re-election against former governor Charlie Crist — who started out as a Republican, then switched to independent, and then to Democrat — we have an election no one in Florida has ever seen before. Crist wasn't the best governor, but when you compare his term with Scott's four years, he looks like the greatest governor in the history of the state.

About the best we can hope for is that Crist wins — because that will give us gridlock in Tallahassee, which will keep the Republicans from doing any more damage to the state.

Their campaign tactics have been to spend millions of dollars telling lies about each other. The clear winner here is Scott, who is a far better liar and has more money.

Hey, did you know we have a thing called the Florida Cabinet? If you do

know, do you have any idea what they do and how much they cost the state each year? Until 2003, there were six cabinet members, all elected by the citizens of Florida, and with just about equal power as the governor. It was set up this way because the legislature only met for 60 days a year and travel to Tallahassee wasn't easy, even in recent years. So the cabinet more or less ran the state for 305 days a year.

Under the new system, there are four cabinet members: the governor, two members that he appoints, and the state attorney general, which for some reason is still an elected office.

And on the ballot this time will be current attorney general Pam Bondi, a professional political hack from Tampa. Her legal résumé is about as thin as it gets. Her latest nonlegal opinion was to say she's appealing a federal district court ruling that Florida's ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. And of course that won't happen until after the election. She wouldn't look so good with a bloody nose on November 4.

So we're left with the same question I asked several months ago: What are we going to do about Tallahassee and Florida's weird political system that enables the rednecks in north Florida and disenfranchises the majority of the voters in the rest of the state?

I thought I had the answer — South Florida sell all the state north of Orlando — half to Georgia and half to Alabama.



That way we could get rid of all the racist pigs, passing them along to places where they'll be happy. Plus, it wouldn't create a new state, so no more U.S. senators would be added to Congress.

Okay, so I had my tongue firmly planted in my cheek. Alas, my tongue-in-cheekness was trumped by the South Miami City Commission, which actually passed a resolution supporting the creation of a new state called South Florida — because they think Tallahassee pretty well ignores us.

This time it was about global warming and rising sea levels. "It's very apparent that the attitude of the northern part of the state is that they would just love to see the state in half and let us just float off into the Caribbean," said South Miami Mayor Phil Stoddard. (See? There are some reasonable politicians left in Florida. They're not all nut cases like Marco Rubio, the "science" senator.)

However, there are people out there who would use the same kind of thinking to forward other agendas we might not like so much. Former Ronald Reagan

speechwriter Douglas MacKinnon has a new book out called *The Secessionist States of America: The Blueprint For Creating a Traditional Values Country ... Now*.

For those of you who don't remember this guy from 30 years ago, let me remind you what a whacko he really is — and so was Reagan. I'm sure you Reagan lovers remember all the good stuff about the Gipper, like how he thumped Mikhail Gorbachev and ruined the Soviet Union. Most have forgotten that he did it the American way — he pulled out our AmEx card and outspent him.

But this time MacKinnon is off the rails. He wants to have an all-white country made up of Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida. It would be called Reagan, and it would have traditional Christian values, no blacks, no gays, no Hispanics. He specifically leaves out Texas from the plan because there are already too many Mexicans there.

Nothing like great Christian values, don't you agree?

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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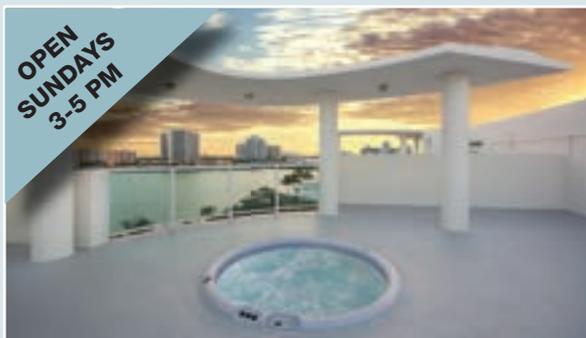


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BizBuzz

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

By Margaret Griffis
BT Contributor

With another brutal winter expected up north, it's easy to be thankful for the wonderful weather South Florida enjoys this time of the year. *BT* readers can also be thankful for the many great businesses that cater to their needs in the Biscayne Corridor, especially those offering the following great deals.

But first, although November seems almost synonymous with Thanksgiving, there *is* another national holiday this month that deserves everyone's attention, Veteran's Day. Beginning at 11:11 a.m. on Tuesday, November 11, the **City of Miami Beach** will hold its annual Veteran's Day Parade along Washington Avenue from 17th to 11th streets. There it turns west on 11th Street and heads over to Flamingo Park. At noon, the All Veterans Parachute Team lands just in time for the wreath-laying ceremony and picnic at the Flamingo Park Baseball Stadium (Michigan Avenue at 15th Street). Free and fun!

For years **Laurenzo's Italian Market** (16385 W. Dixie Hwy, 305-945-6381) has been making Thanksgiving dinner a pleasurable experience for those who don't quite enjoy the kitchen side of eating big. If you want to be part of that happy crowd, then download Laurenzo's Thanksgiving order form at laurenzos-market.com, submit it by 4:00 p.m. November 25, and then simply relax until pickup time. Their chefs and bakers will

be up all night preparing your traditional feast, while you sleep peacefully. You'll still have to clean up afterward, though.

There are so many ways to enjoy turkey this month, but **Jefe's Original Fish Taco & Burgers** (12581 Biscayne Blvd., 305-989-5811) serves one of the best. And they're offering \$1 off their popular "Turkey Gobbler" grilled sandwich (Texas toast grilled with Havarti cheese, oven-roasted turkey breast, applewood-smoked bacon, vine-ripened tomatoes, mayo, and banana peppers) and a side of açai-cranberry relish if you mention the *BT* when ordering.

Another veteran of the Thanksgiving kitchen-relief brigades is **Bagels & Company** (11064 Biscayne Blvd., 305-892-2435), where proprietor David Cohen continues his tradition of offering hassle-free family feasts for both November and December holidays. Check their ad in this issue's Dining Guide for details.

How about dine in *or* take out for Turkey Day? That's the offer from **Tuna's Seafood Restaurant**, where Chef Rolf Fellhauer is offering a dine-in bargain (\$24.95 adults, \$14.95 under age 14) on Thanksgiving Day. The extravagant meal (see their ad for menu) can also be ordered to go. (By the way, proprietor Michael Chiodo reports that Tuna's Oktoberfest weekend was crowded with *BT* revelers. *Prost!*)

Thanksgiving may be a difficult time to be vegetarian, unless you're at **Mina's Mediterraneo** (749 NE 79th St., 786-391-0300). Owner Yasmine Kotb is cooking up lots of new choices this month,



and some of them are deliciously vegan. Plus, her new outdoor patio is opening soon, which is perfect timing because Mina's mom is currently offering (while she's in town) a free bottle of wine for any birthday party of five or more.

It's no secret that **Casablanca**, on the Miami River, has one of the best seafood restaurants in town. But what many *BT* readers may not know is that the venerable, family-run Miami institution has returned to Biscayne Bay, just across the water from Watson Island, its original home. This second restaurant is tucked inside the DoubleTree Grand Hotel (1717 N. Bayshore Dr., 305-371-4930), but the waterfront views are still remarkable. Don't forget to bring this issue's ad to their "On The Bay" location for a free bottle of wine, corked just in time for stone crab season!

"Progress" may be slurping up established businesses, such as the popular River Seafood & Oyster Bar and its just-closed neighbor Tobacco Road, but the River's chef/restaurateur David Bracha

has plans. Not only will the oyster bar move to new, larger riverfront digs next year, his Design District eatery and new *BT* advertiser, **Oak Tavern** (35 NE 40th St., 786-391-1818), is in constant motion. Consider Tuesdays, for example. They are now AOC nights (appellation d'origine contrôlée), which feature two glasses of specially selected wine, matched with two small plates, for only \$25. Check oaktavernmiami.com to see the AOC schedule.

For our hungry readers at the northern end of the Biscayne Corridor, we're happy to welcome new advertiser **Beach Bar at Newport Pier** (16501 Collins Ave., 305-957-1110). However you prefer your surf or turf, chefs Joseph Whitmore and Mike Jin prepare delicious seafood, steak, and sushi at this newly opened seaside raw bar, right on the pier in Sunny Isles Beach. The "bar" in Beach Bar isn't limited to just sushi, either. Wednesday night is Ladies Night with

Continued on page 20

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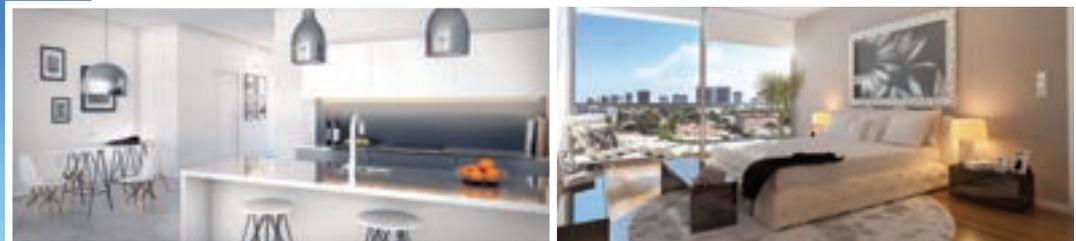
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BizBuzz

Continued from page 18

half-off drinks and even a DJ.

Pioneering producer of local farmers markets, Claire Tomlin's The Market Company (305-531-0038 for vendor info) has established its latest location at Museum Park in downtown Miami, just outside the Pérez Art Museum Miami. Besides offering locally grown produce, the market also features treats from Zak the Baker, La Provence French Bakery, KeyzBeez Honey, as well as gourmet empanadas, paella, ceviche, pappardelle pasta, and fresh mozzarella. **Museum Park Farmers Market** (1075 Biscayne Blvd.) is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Saturday.

Is November too early to exclaim "Ho Ho Ho!" at the sight of so many scrumptious desserts? BizBuzz thinks not! Returning advertiser Jenny Rissone is offering Thanksgiving specialty pies, cakes, and other seasonal delicacies at her popular store **Pastry Is Art** (12591 Biscayne Blvd., 305-603-9340). For picky eaters who can (or must) thumb their nose at sugar and gluten, Jenny has created sugar- and gluten-free versions of many favorite treats. Mention you saw her ad in the *BT* and earn yourself a free mini pumpkin cupcake. Too busy shopping for gifts to stop by the store? You can also visit her new kiosk at the Aventura Mall, right outside the Sears store. Yum!

Not *everyone* is thinking about stuffing their faces all month, so the **Village at Gulfstream Park** (501 South Federal Hwy., Hallandale Beach, 954-378-0900) is offering live music and dancing at the Champions Plaza, every Saturday in November at 8:00 p.m. Start losing those holiday pounds before you even put them on — for free. Check www.thevillageatgulfstreampark.com for band schedules and other deals.

Reserve Sunday, November 23, to indulge your car fancy at **Hialeah Park Racing & Casino** (100 E. 32nd St., Hialeah; 305-885-8000) from noon to 5:00 p.m. Visitors can get a "close-up look" at their favorite race cars and vintage classics. Admission and parking are free! Check their ad for info about the upcoming José Feliciano concert.

If you're looking for a home instead of a car, call the **Jack Coden Group** (700 NE 90th St., 305-742-5225), the #1 Keller Williams group in Miami and Miami Beach. The group has launched a new website, www.jackcodengroup.com,

where clients can peruse properties using state-of-the-art features.

Adriana Faerman, agent-broker at the **Faerman Group** (305-773-0253, afaerman@onesothebysrealty.com), wants to remind *BT* readers that "Thanksgiving is a good time to say thank you and to *give*," so the group is doing just that. Five percent of every commission they make will go to the charity of *your choice*, so call them up to find out how their marketing strategy will sell your home or condo quickly.

Then you'll need a friendly, neighborhood bank to stash your loot. **C1 Bank** (2632 N. Miami Ave., 305-702-6810) is just that place. Even if you don't have an account with them (yet), feel free to attend their Wine Down Wednesday networking event on November 19, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Not only will you get the lowdown on how C1 can accommodate all your financial needs, the event also brings together your neighbors and local business owners. And you might just win a prize in the raffle.

The **Miami Book Fair International** is the nation's finest literary festival, and each year it attracts many superstars. This 31st annual production is no exception. The fair opens on November 16 at the Olympia Theater in the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts, (174 E. Flagler St., mdclivearts.org) with an unusual presentation by Ira Glass (radio host of *This American Life*), choreographer Monica Bill Barnes, and dancer Anna Bass. The trio will dance their ways through stories about their own lives. Tickets start at \$35.

A few days earlier, not far from the Olympia, the Miami-Dade College's **Museum of Art + Design** opens a pop-up gallery on the second floor of the Freedom Tower (600 Biscayne Blvd.; 305-237-7710). "Zine-o-Mania! A World of Fanzines from the Special Collections at the University of Miami" runs from November 8 through February 8, and makes for a fun side trip during the book fair.

For a little ear candy, the place to be is at the **Saint Martha-Yamaha Concert Series**, which opens on Sunday, November 16, at 3:00 p.m. with the Emmet Cohen Trio. At only 24 years of age, native Miamian and UM grad Cohen is an award-winning jazz pianist who has thrilled audiences with his brilliant technique and a steady feel for the standards. Now living in New York, his heavy touring schedule doesn't allow for many performances in South Florida. General

admission is just \$10, and the event is held at the acoustically divine St. Martha's in the Shores (9301 Biscayne Blvd., 305-751-0005). For the season's entire schedule, visit www.saintmarthaconcerts.com.

Just because it's the season of indulgence doesn't mean you can't also protect the planet. A typical home car wash uses between 80 and 140 gallons of water, filled with cleaning solvents and other junk, that go straight into our aquifer, canals, and Biscayne Bay. Yuck.... On the other hand, **Busy Bee Carwash** (10550 Biscayne Blvd., 305-891-5889) uses less than 45 gallons to spruce up your coach, and all of it is then recycled, so you can feel great about letting someone else do the work. Check their ad in this issue for special offers.

Top Dog Ashley Vail of **Bed & Biscuit** (305-788-4934) wants pup owners to feel better about having to leave Fido behind during their holiday travels, so she's offering *BT* readers two free days of pet-sitting with a five-day minimum. She also offers walking, feeding, and playtime if you aren't traveling so far.

What? You haven't booked any holiday trips? No worries. **Resorts World Bimini** (888-930-8688) has made it easier to take advantage of their inexpensive day cruises to the Bahamas. You can now travel from Port Everglades, Tuesday-Thursday, aboard the *Bimini SuperFast*. Introductory rates are only \$49.50 for the day cruises. Cruises from PortMiami are still available Friday-Sunday. Book online at www.rwbimini.com.

If your modest holiday get-together is starting to take on the appearance of a full-blown shindig, there's still time to call Arnie Perlberg, director of the **Gold-coast Society Dance Band** (305-754-6976, arnieperl@att.net) and schedule his 14-piece big band for your soirée. While they are masters of 1930s and 1940s jazz and swing, they also delve into Latin styles, ballads, and even the newest hits. And you can request any size ensemble, from solo piano to the full band.

While it may be a bit of a ride for readers who like to stay within the confines of the Biscayne Corridor, sometimes you have to go out of your way to score a great deal. For more than 30 years, the **Wilton Theatre Auction Gallery** (1446 NE 26th St., Wilton Manors, 954-530-4396) has been that place. The inventory changes every week, and you never know what you might walk away with: décor items, antiques, art, furniture, collectibles, or even a Rolls Royce. The auction takes

place every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

As if there already weren't a million things you have to get done before end of the year, don't forget you also need to be enrolled in a health insurance plan by December 15. That's if you want coverage by New Year's Day. The **Florida Blue North Miami Center** (13665 Biscayne Blvd., 786-541-0602) is one of 18 statewide locations providing insurance and other health coverage services for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida members. Their knowledgeable staff can help you make sense of all your choices in this complicated chore.

One of those important choices, of course, is to get your flu shots. **Medi-Station Urgent Care Center** in Miami Shores (9600 NE 2nd Ave., 305-603-7650) offers them seven days a week. They also want to remind everyone that frequent hand-washing in high people-traffic areas is key to staying healthy during cold and flu season.

But long before the health insurance deadline, pick up the phone and call **Soltanik Dental** (2999 NE 191st St., 305-466-2334) to set up an orthodontic treatment. Dr. Valeria Soltanik is offering braces at only \$3800, but this exceptional deal ends mid-November, so hurry.

Now that the kids are getting their teeth straightened, it's also time to sort out their educational choices for the 2015-2016 school year. Open house tours at **Monsignor Edward Pace High School** (15600 NW 32nd Ave., Miami Gardens; 305-623-PACE), one of the area's best, are available on November 22. In the meantime, visit www.pacehs.com for more information.

If *les enfants* are destined to study exclusively in French, there's no better school for them than the **Ecole Franco-Americaine de Miami** (650 NE 88th Terr., 786-268-1914 ext. 26). Registration for 2015 is now open and tours of the school are also available. Visit www.frenchschoolmiami.org for more information.

The *BT* would also like to congratulate **Kung Fu Connection** (1396 NE 125th St., 305-895-8326) on its 29th anniversary this month. Under the guidance of Master Rubio, a direct disciple of Shaolin, students have learned various martial arts, including northern Shaolin Kung Fu, Tai Chi Chuan, and Ba Gua, among others. Children and adults are welcome to join the journey to better health, clarity, and purpose. For more information, visit kungfuconnection.com.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com



No. 8. Oil and acrylic on canvas. 158 in. x 216 in. 2013. Image Courtesy of the artist.

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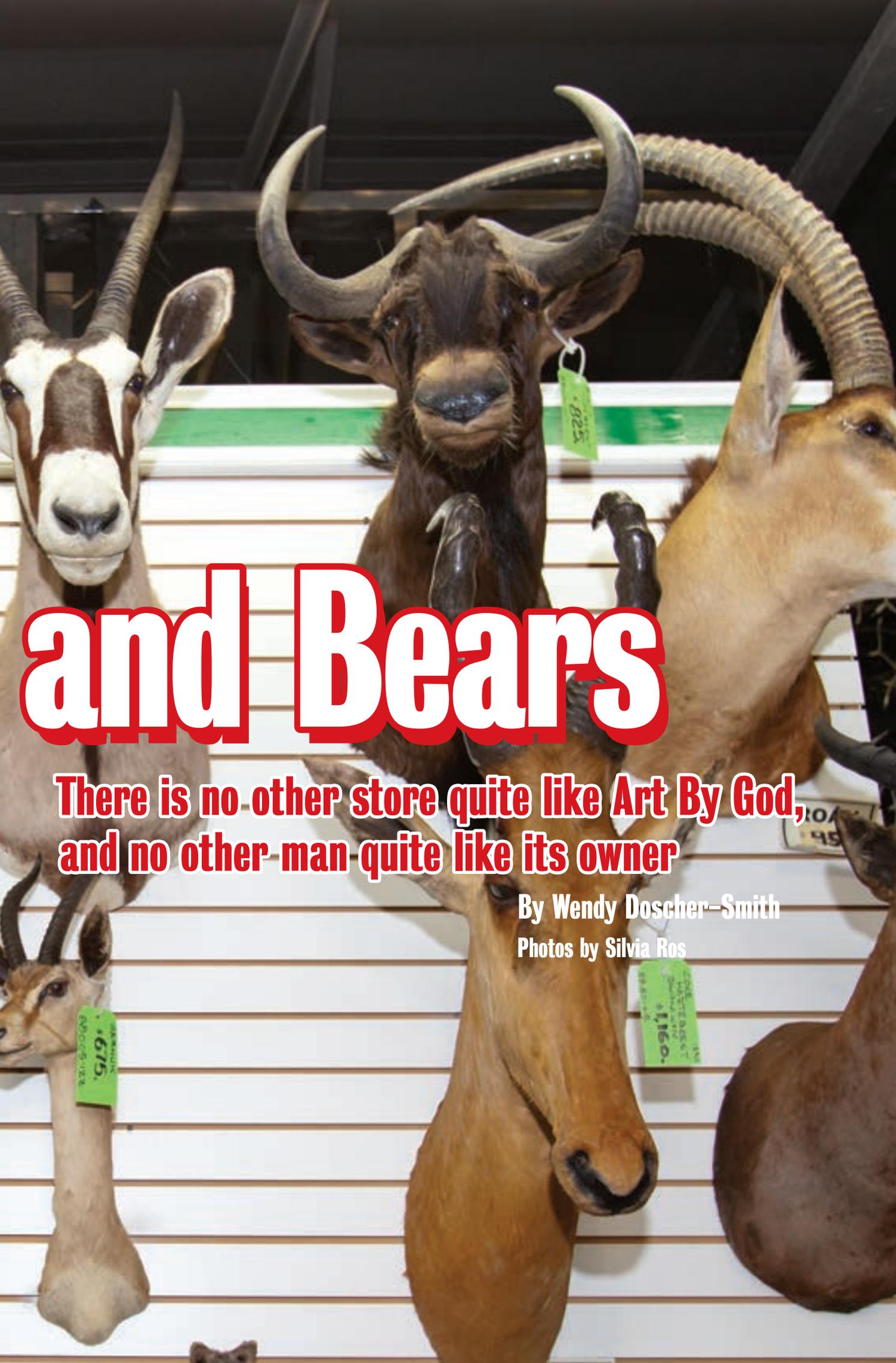
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and Bears

**There is no other store quite like Art By God,
and no other man quite like its owner**

By Wendy Doscher-Smith

Photos by Silvia Ros

In October 2012, *Biscayne Times* published the following story about the bizarre and much-beloved Miami store Art by God, at 3705 Biscayne Blvd., whose aisles, walls, and display cases were covered and filled with fossils, gemstones, taxidermy, insects, one-of-a-kind artifacts, and all manner of preserved nature.

The store, owned by Gene Harris, closed its doors not long after a fire destroyed the Wynwood warehouse Harris used to store and ship his inventory — just days after the *BT* story appeared. The business itself shut down abruptly this past July, at a time when the 78-year-old Harris pleaded guilty to illegal trafficking in rhinoceros horns.

Last month the U.S. Attorney announced that Harris had been sentenced in Federal District Court in Miami to three years' probation, including home confinement with electronic monitoring, and a criminal fine of \$10,000.

"The charges," according to the news release, "related to an illegal deal that occurred between June 2011 and July 2011, in which Harris engaged in a series of telephone conversations from Miami to a customer in California to discuss and arrange for the sale of Black rhinoceros horns by a resident of Phoenix, Arizona."

Harris traveled to Phoenix and took his customer to the couple who sold the client "a Black rhinoceros shoulder mount, including the two horns" for approximately \$60,000. "To conceal the nature of the transaction and make it appear that it was solely an intra-state deal, a false invoice was prepared, listing a third-party Arizona resident as the buyer. Harris was paid a 'finder's fee' by the California customer of approximately \$10,000 for his services."

Harris was involved in a second sale of Black rhino horns in San Antonio, Texas, in October 2011, for which he "provided a fraudulent hand-written statement to the sellers assuring them that as his business was Texas-based, he would ensure the horns did not leave the state — in an effort to make the transaction appear lawful."

Most of you reading this have, at one time or another, driven along the 3700 block of Biscayne Boulevard, just north of I-195. Chances are you've noticed the one-story white building on the east side of the street, the one whose exterior is decorated with silhouettes of dinosaurs.

Along the sidewalk in front of the building's large windows you may also have noticed a very large bear rearing up its hind legs. Next to it is a pair of marble lions, each weighing two and a half tons, and a ten-foot-tall bull carved from a tree trunk. Sometimes these characters change, but such intriguing displays always beckon.

If you haven't yielded to your curiosity, pulled into the building's adjacent parking lot, and walked in the front door — well, you have a treat in store.

This is Art By God, a retail business with an astonishing inventory of fossils, gemstones, shells, mounted insects, feathers, wood carvings, stone pottery, ethnic collectibles, pelts, and taxidermy. For browsers wandering through its Wildlife Gallery or Rock and Fossil Gallery, it can easily double as a natural history museum with free admission. In fact, museums are among Art By God's clients.

Owner Gene Harris, a self-taught fossil collector, opened his first store in 1982 in what was then the Loehmann's Plaza shopping center in Kendall. Originally he named the business Harris's Art and Collectibles, but soon after the store's opening, an attorney came in and bought a fossilized, extinct marine mollusk called an ammonite (from which the nautilus evolved) for his office.

When he contacted the store to say he couldn't locate the artist's signature, Harris replied, "God forgot to sign it." Thus the name Art By God was born.

That store eventually closed, but in 1987 Harris opened in a new location, downtown Miami's new Bayside Marketplace. In 1992 he opened the much larger Biscayne Boulevard store. There are fewer large-scale pieces in the Bayside Marketplace store, though you can view a full-size, fossilized cave bear in the display window. That store, says Harris, is stocked more for impulse tourist purchases.

Harris also owns an Art By God showroom in Laredo, Texas, established in 1990 and still operating. Earlier still, he had a store in Tucson, Arizona. He

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Fossilized skeleton of a Xenorophid whale (11-15 million years old), discovered in South Carolina: Just two of these have been found and this is the most complete.



Archarocetes whale fossil from the Miocene Age (20 million years ago), discovered in South Carolina.

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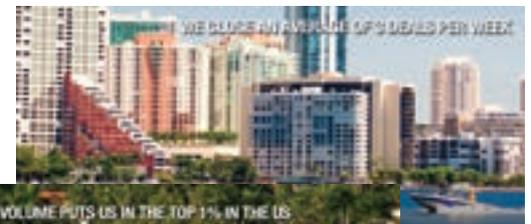


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Art By God

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also has a thriving online wholesale business, primarily servicing catalogues and other retailers. Soon, Harris says, he'll have an online retail store as well.

Today the brick-and-mortar Art By God is Miami's best-kept secret for those wanting to stroll through rare natural objects and exotic manmade wares, or to gain some insight into natural history, evolutionary processes, bones, fossils, rocks, and gemstones.

Harris, an intrepid explorer, has traveled to more than 120 countries during his decades of treasure hunting, and his collection is sufficiently varied to fill several types of shops, ranging from new-age boutiques (crystals in all shapes, hues, and sizes) and furniture stores (look for elk antler chandeliers, chairs seemingly made entirely from antlers, dyed cowhide chairs, and other carved pieces) to museum-style gift shops.

A baby crinoid, a sea animal that resembles a small fern but whose tendrils are actually feeding arms, is one of his prized possessions. He found the fossil, which is at least 150 million years old, in Bolivia.

Looking for a gift that isn't made of plastic or stenciled with a monogram? A gift for that person who has everything? Art By God won't disappoint. How about a pterodactyl juvenile, a small species of pterodactyl? Art By God has one of just two known complete pterodactyl juvenile skeletons in the world, on sale for \$182,000. You can also find a large slab of one of the nation's oldest fossils: a two billion-year-old blue-green algae stromatolite (\$14,500).

The showroom offers less expensive items as well, ranging from \$3 raccoon penis bones (and a few walrus penis bones) to gemstone pendants, ornate knives and wood carvings, strands of stone beads, beetle wing and butterfly wing earrings, small skulls, fossilized fish, and insects in resin.

Larger pieces include the fossilized skull of a *Mesohippus*, a three-toed horse that lived some 30 million years ago (\$8650); skeleton of a *Platycarpus*, an extinct aquatic lizard that swam about 80 million years ago (\$160,000); and vertebrae from a *Catasaurus*, or duckbilled dinosaur, that lived some 80 million years ago (\$2850).

While browsing, don't miss the "Wall of Ass," which features the rear



Effigy figures from Mayan Meso America, circa 300-700 A.D.

ends of various stuffed mammals, including a white-tailed deer and a goat.

Fossils of the *Palaeolama*, an animal that resembled the horse and the camel (both of which originate from the same family, *Camelid*), are found in highest concentration in central Florida, says Harris, who once had a *Palaeolama* that a colleague found while they were fossil hunting near Arcadia. He sold the fossil to the Houston Museum of Natural Science in 1992. (Harris also owns two pet llamas who meet him every day when he returns to his South Dade home, awaiting their treat, usually bread.)

This past August, he sold a 12-foot mammoth tusk for \$20,000. He also once sold a stuffed Barbary lion for \$28,000. Barbary lions have been extinct since the 1920s.

Just inside the entrance of the Biscayne Boulevard store, visitors encounter a 5000-pound jade statue that took its sculptor 18 months to complete. Harris found it in China in 1998 on his yearly visit looking for importable items.

Deeper in the store, you can wander past cases of minerals, shiny and dull, raw and polished, and common and rare. Cassiterite, for example, a smoky, brownish-gray gemstone with transparent crystals, is rarely found weighing more than one pound, Harris notes. Small pieces, weighed in ounces, sell for hundreds of dollars. He once owned a

piece that weighed five pounds and sold it for more than \$8000.

Likewise, the Bayside Marketplace store has an amethyst "cathedral" (a cut geode with crystal interior) priced at more than \$20,000. Both showrooms also offer many specimens for far less.

Most of the fossils Harris sells are from the United States, specifically from Kansas, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Texas, and Florida. Crinoids, those small sea animals resembling ferns, are plentiful in Indiana. Utah is reliable supplier of coprolite, or dinosaur dung. He brings back petrified wood from California and Oregon. Generally in the United States, Harris explains, if you have fossils on your property, they belong to you. In Florida, however, the state retains the right to designate "archaeological landmarks" on privately owned land. Such a designation imposes a layer of legal protection on archaeological sites.

Harris, now 74 years old, recalls that he began collecting fossils and arrowheads in his hometown of Broken Bow, Oklahoma, when he was just seven. Arrowheads were fairly easy to find, he says, and he scouted out nearby woods and riverbanks for them.

He quit school at age 13 because, he says, he always had trouble with

phonetics. The truant officer in Broken Bow tried to force him attend each year, and Harris would comply, but only for the first two weeks. Finally the truant officer gave up.

The boy was intelligent — while still a teen he began working for a surveyor — but the formal school setting and his phonetics issues made it untenable.

At 18 he entered the U.S. Marine Corps and continued his work in surveying. One of the Corps engineers took him under his wing, Harris recalls, and helped him with his reading skills. Harris took it seriously, reading as much as he could on anthropology, animal life, and husbandry.

When he left the Marine Corps, Harris wound up back in Oklahoma and attended Southern Nazarene University in Bethany, paying tuition out of his earnings as a freelance city surveyor. This time school seemed a good fit. Each time he took a new class, he became fascinated with the topic and said to himself, "Oh boy, this is it!"

Among other subjects, he took numerous art classes and ultimately earned 164 college credits, more than enough to graduate. But he still couldn't pass freshman English and left school without a degree. Harris now believes he was

Continued on page 28



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Monday, November 17

6 p.m. / **PATRICIA CORNWELL** on *Flesh and Blood* ■■■ \$15
 8 p.m. / **ANNE RICE** on *Prince Lestat: The Vampire Chronicles* ■■■ \$15

Tuesday, November 18

6 p.m. / **DAVE BARRY** on *You Can Date Boys When You're Forty* and **SANDRA TSING LOH** on *The Madwoman in the Volvo: My Year of Raging Hormones* ■■■ \$15
 8 p.m. / **NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF** on *A Path Appears: Transforming Lives, Creating Opportunity* (Sponsored by *The Miami Foundation*) ■■■ \$15

Wednesday, November 19

6 p.m. / **BARBARA EHRENREICH** on *Living With a Wild God: An Unbeliever's Search for the Truth About Everything* ■■■ \$15
 8 p.m. / **CHUCK TODD** on *The Stranger: Barack Obama in the White House* ■■■ \$15

Thursday, November 20

6 p.m. / **LARRY MCMURTRY** and **DIANA OSSANA** in conversation on *The Last Kind Words Saloon* ■■■ \$15
 8 p.m. / **JOYCE CAROL OATES** on *Lovely, Dark, Deep* (Sponsored by *The National YoungArts Foundation*) ■■■ \$15

Friday, November 21

6 p.m. / **NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNERS** (Sponsored by *Knight Foundation*) ■■■ \$15
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Art By God

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suffering from undiagnosed dyslexia.

At age 24, he became a registered surveyor and moved to Guyana for a job with the U.S. State Department. He stayed there for about a year. Next was a job with the World Bank, in 1972. He was based in Brazil and worked as an inspector of "gas gathering systems." The next year he did similar work in Bolivia. That's where he met the woman he would marry, Gisela.

The two wed in 1973, and the following year his passion for fossil hunting seems to have reignited. He recalls that he typically spent 15 minutes at his desk writing survey reports, then he'd go out in search of fossils. "I used to carry rocks and frogs and arrowheads in my pocket," he says of his adolescent days. "I never grew up."

It was also during this time that Harris began to study minerals and gemstones, including their histories and mystical properties. This new pursuit eventually led him to become a certified gemologist with the Gemological Institute of America.

When his Bolivian contract expired in 1974, Harris and Gisela moved to Santa



Gillicus Arcuatus (on wall): An exceptionally large representative of this fish species, which lived in the Western Interior Seaway (central U.S.) some 65 million years ago. Discovered in Kansas. Asking price: \$38,000.

Cruz, Bolivia, where he opened his first fossil-and-art store, in 1975. It remained in operation until 1981, when he and his wife decided to move to Miami, in part because of its proximity to her family and

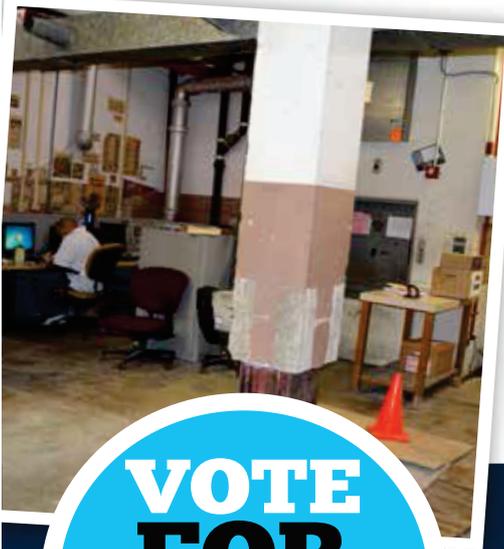
property in Bolivia, and in part because he loves the warm Miami weather.

In many ways, his motives for founding and operating Art By God are the same as his childhood motives for

collecting fossils: He just likes to do it. Polite, curious, somewhat reserved, Harris doesn't appear to be as interested

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Art By God

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in making a name for himself as enjoying what he loves. Yet he is well known within the industry and has cultivated many business relationships and partnerships that have also morphed into friendships. When the *BT* asked a number of people who know Harris for different reasons, they uniformly described him as a dedicated businessman and kind mentor who had helped them get started in their own businesses. Take, for example, Nancy Smith, owner of Necromance in Los Angeles, which stocks oddities and rarities, many of which are tinged with the macabre. Smith is a client of Harris's, ordering taxidermy items, bones, and mounted butterflies, tarantulas, bats, and animal skulls. Most recently she ordered 30 goat skulls.

Harris, she says, was one of the first dealers on the scene. "If it weren't for Gene's business, I probably would not have started my business," she says. "Gene used to have a place in Tucson, and I called it my natural history grocery store because I would



Gene Harris: "He's an incredible explorer and adventurer. He's like Indiana Jones without the hair."

literally push a grocery store cart around the store [collecting objects to sell]."

Alan Detrich is another fossil hunter since childhood and a longtime

friend who lives in Kansas. Detrich was involved in the oil and gas industry and remembers that he was down on his luck after the oil crash

of the mid-1980s. He credits Harris with helping him make his start in the

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Art By God

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fossil-dealing world.

Harris bought Detrich's first fossil for \$4500 in a trade that included the skull of a mosasaur, a marine reptile resembling a swimming lizard that lived 140 million years ago; a fossilized fish from Brazil; and the fossil of a mesosaurus, another reptile.

Then Harris purchased two more mosasaur fossils from Detrich, who had been waiting for an offer from a Japanese museum. The museum buyers hesitated but Harris did not. He later resold the fossils to the same museum.

Detrich became best known perhaps for his 1992 discovery with his brother in South Dakota of a nearly complete female *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton, dubbed Samson, which he went on to sell for millions of dollars through the auction house Bonhams & Butterfields.

Detrich is also well known in Kansas for his advocacy of "intelligent design" and his opposition to teaching evolution in public schools. Somehow he



A pterodactyl juvenile (100 million years old), discovered in Kansas: This specimen is thought to represent a new species yet to be named.

balances his love of ancient fossils and his belief that life on Earth began relatively recently. "Gene is the hardest-working man in the natural history world," says Detrich. "Gene is the James Brown and

the Godfather of the fossil world. He takes care of us."

Ron Magill, wildlife expert and communications director at Zoo Miami, is another longtime friend. "Gene knows

so much," says Magill, "and he taught me a lot about bones and the different types of fossil record. He's an incredible

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Art By God

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explorer and adventurer who is fascinated with wilderness and fossils. He's like Indiana Jones without the hair."

Though Harris has a great presence in the store, he does not run Art By God alone. His daughter, Ingrid Antezana, manages the office side of the business and has worked with her father since she was 12 years old. "He loves what he does from the moment he wakes up to the moment he goes to bed," Antezana says. However, Antezana didn't follow in her father's footsteps as a fossil hunter or minerals collector. "There is so much to learn," she says, "and I never focused on one theme."

Harris must of course keep current with all the rules and regulations of the business in his dealings with dead animals. There are many, and they are always changing. Two are certain, though: No endangered species can be exported or sold across state lines, and all nearly endangered species are highly protected.

A hunter, for example, can bring back an elephant trophy and have it taxidermied in

the U.S., according to the US 1988 Elephant Conservation Act, which asserts, "There is no evidence that sport hunting is part of the poaching that contributes to the illegal trade in African elephant ivory." But once back in the U.S., nobody may sell a stuffed elephant or its ivory. (Antique ivory or pieces obtained prior to 1988 can be sold.)

Elephants are not the only protected animals. There are also numerous federal laws protecting a range of animals, from migratory birds to marine mammals.

"We stay away from any purchase or selling of any endangered species or mammal, or any elephant protected by the Elephant Conservation Act," Harris stresses.

Harris adds that he isn't a hunter, nor is he particularly fond of animal parts, such as hides and taxidermy. "The only thing I kill is time," he jokes. Still, there are a *lot* of taxidermied



An amethyst cathedral: Harris has one at Bayside Marketplace on sale at more than \$20,000.

heads in Art By God, and you can almost feel their eyes follow you around the store. All of these he acquired from hunters' collections and from estate sales. And although his real love is fossils, he says, he does appreciate the

sculptural beauty of taxidermy.

"The sculpture of nature is astounding, and that is the reason we sell it," he

Continued on page 36



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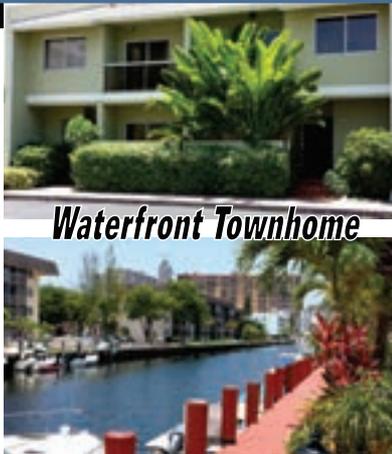
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- Water Views
- Boat Dock Included



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AVENTURA / BRAVURA

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- Totally Renovated
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CONDOMINIUM \$119,000

EASTERN SHORES

- 1 Bedroom 1 Bath
- 812 SQ FT
- Water Views
- 55 and older



CONDOMINIUM \$169,000

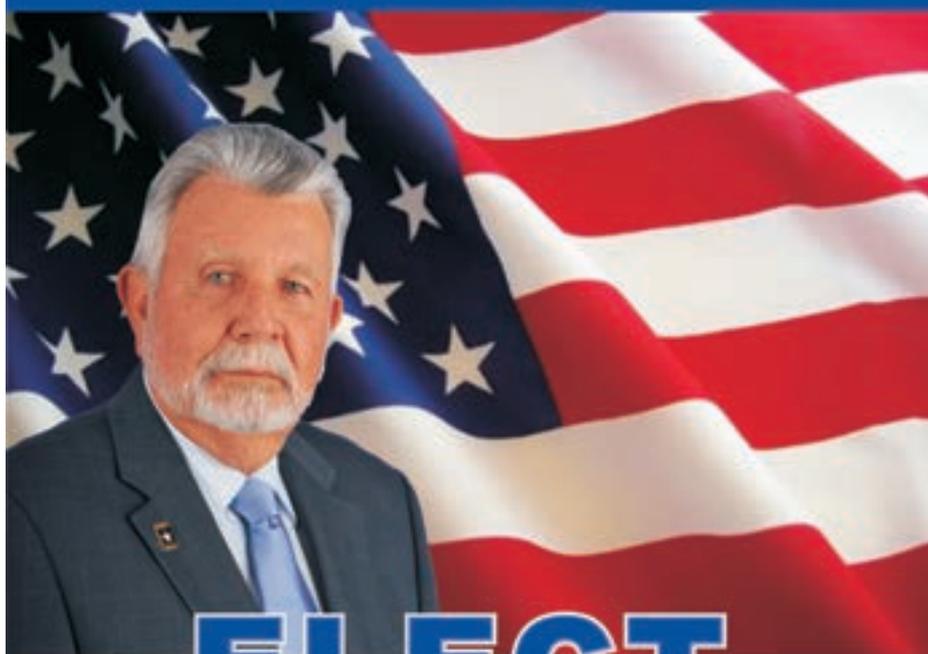
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A display of mounted butterflies (foreground) watched over by a very large bear.



Art By God carries much more than fossils, including statuary, furniture, and crystals of all types.

Art By God

Continued from page 34

says. "We sell them as art. It's not that we're out harvesting things out of the field to take into the store and sell."

Actually, he says, he hopes to educate his customers as well. As such, there are educational posters and \$12 rock beginner's kits for children that sit in the same room as a skeleton of a xenorophid, or

ancient whale, which sells for \$182,000.

"We sell for education and for art's sake," says Harris. "When you see something that is beautiful here, it's not only beautiful, but educational as well, if you look into it."

He pauses, as if considering his industry anew, and says, "It's a weird business, isn't it?"

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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A Big Win for Wynwood

Despite its conditional life span, Gateway Park is coming

By Helen Hill
BT Contributor

The word was out on Wynwood's hipness even before last September's survey in *Vogue* magazine. The area ranked as one of the world's 15 coolest neighborhoods for its "buzzing, young network of galleries, stores, cafés, and chic watering holes."

Wynwood-mania or not, a remarkable 238 teams from 23 countries entered the Wynwood Gateway Park Imagine, Design, and Build Competition launched earlier this year, with winners announced last month. First place was to receive \$10,000 in prize money, with second place at \$5000 and third place \$2500.

The competition partnered Wynwood-based Metro 1 Properties, which

owns the site; DawnTown Miami, a nonprofit organization that promotes creative architecture in Miami through competitions; and the Miami chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Miami).

According to Allan Shulman, principal of Shulman + Associates and a competition jury member, "Wynwood is a test tube for new approaches to urban/architectural/landscape projects in Miami. The large interest in this competition, and the final results, indicate that Miami is the world's test tube."

Though only a small "test tube," the Gateway Park project to transform a 14,000-square-foot grassy parking lot at 2825 NW 2nd Ave. into a vibrant neighborhood space, is significant. By

.....
Continued on page 40



Gateway Park's winning design, *Wynwood Greenhouse*, is also a local entry, from artist Jim Drain; Roberto Rovira of FIU's Department of Landscape Architecture; and Nick Gelpi of the university's School of Architecture.



Wynwood Greenhouse features planted walls, movable seating, and a pathway around earthen mounds covered in grasses and wildflowers to attract butterflies.

Miami's Looming Four-Wheel Challenge

Find a parking place downtown and you'll be a winner!

By Erik Bojnansky
BT Senior Writer

When you go the American Airlines Arena next year to watch the Miami Heat or to enjoy a concert, you'll probably want to wear your walking shoes.

According to Kelly Penton, spokeswoman for the consortium building Miami Worldcenter, construction crews should start breaking ground on the 27-acre, mixed-use project in downtown Miami at the end of this year or the beginning of 2015.

Once that happens American Airlines Arena visitors will have to deal with the loss of about 3000 parking spaces just west of the venue, spread among a number of surface lots now owned by Miami Worldcenter.

The 19,600-seat facility at 601 Biscayne Blvd. is owned by Miami-Dade County, run by the Miami Heat, and has only 939 on-site parking spaces.

Kim Stone, executive vice president of the Miami Heat and general manager of American Airlines Arena, says she's looking forward to completion of the first phase of Miami Worldcenter, which



Phase 1 of the Miami Worldcenter project: American Airlines Arena is in the bottom left corner. Two parking lots across Biscayne Boulevard are slated for development as condominium towers.

includes 1100 luxury residences, the 2.2 million-square-foot JW Marriott Marquis and Expo Center developed by MDM Group, and the 750,000-square-foot Mall at Miami Worldcenter built by the Forbes Company and Taubman Properties.

"It'll ultimately be a wonderful addition to downtown," Stone says. "At the same time...there will be growing pains."

To find a way to minimize those pains, Stone says, her organization has

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Kitchen Cabinets? Permit, Please!

A cautionary tale of unlimited power in Miami Shores

By Christian Cipriani
BT Contributor

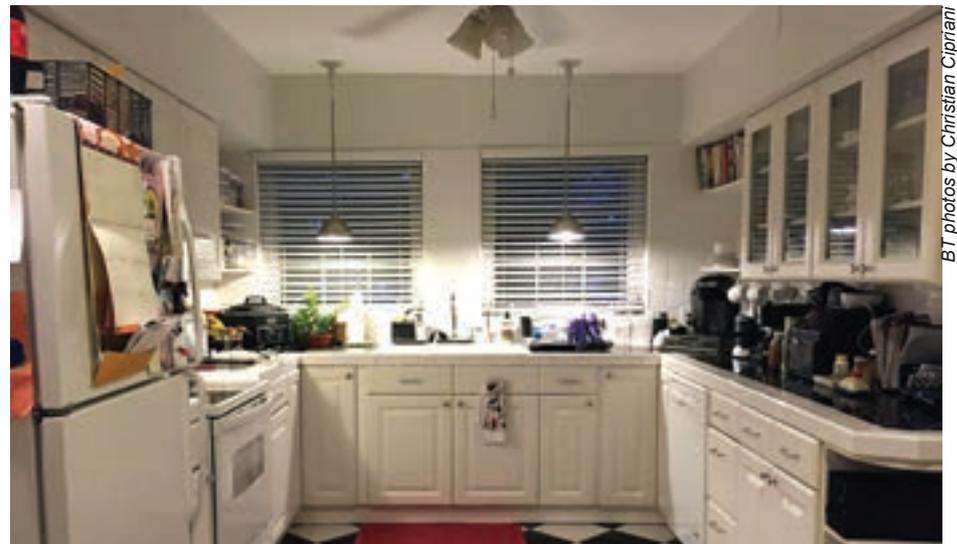
On November 21, 2000, Nora Schaefer and her husband, Paul, purchased the single-family home at 47 NE 93rd St. in Miami Shores. They did it as a favor to a friend embroiled in a contentious divorce, and they rented the house right back to her so she wouldn't have to move.

A few months later, in early 2001, Nora Schaefer asked her son-in-law to oversee the installation of new kitchen cabinets and a tile floor at the rental house. Around the same time, one of the Schaefer's eight children, Timothy — a quadriplegic since the age of 11 — had a choking incident and was rushed to the hospital. He lost his ability to swallow

and went on a feeding tube.

Overwhelmed, the Schaefer's moved him to an assisted-living facility across from Barry University, but in October 2001 he experienced another episode of severe choking, and this time it was fatal.

Within months of burying his son, Paul Schaefer fell, hit his head, and began bleeding in the brain. He underwent a major operation for blood clots and then another for an aortic aneurysm, but his mental and physical condition worsened to the point that he required around-the-clock care. Over the next four years, he was in and out of assisted-living facilities, during which time he suffered a stroke that left him with seizures and partial paralysis. After weathering all of this, Paul Schaefer died in 2005, when a car struck him as he crossed the street.



BT photos by Christian Cipriani

The kitchen cabinets and floor tiles, though properly installed, triggered a \$250,000 penalty.

His wife, Nora, was forced to take charge of the family's business affairs. Despite being left to process so much grief and personal chaos, she managed to keep her life together and maintain their investment properties. But unknown to her, a financial nightmare was brewing in the kitchen of her rental home in Miami Shores.

Nora Schaefer is a Realtor and has long been a well-known figure across Miami, thanks to her work on the city's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board (HEP) and with the Dade Heritage Trust. She's made it her life's mission to

help maintain the architecture and character of a city known for shortsighted and haphazard change.

As a Realtor, Schaefer knew she needed permits for major projects like electrical work and additions, but she claims she had no idea that Miami Shores required permits for just about everything, including new kitchen cabinets and a tile floor. News of the unpermitted kitchen work traveled back to Village Hall, and in 2001 a violation notice was posted on the door of 47 NE 93rd St.

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Extreme Eco

Take a look at a house that's completely self-sustaining

By Olga Figueroa
Special to the BT

The small white house at 11816 NE 6th Ave. in Biscayne Park is actually really big — on savings.

The house, named GaiaMa (ancient Greek for Mother Earth) is self-sustaining and energy-efficient, says its owner, Jean Sfez. He's the managing partner of Urbaneco Development, a real estate development firm he founded in 2011 that promotes sustainable, cost-effective living. GaiaMa is the company's "first EcoLifestyle home," Sfez says.

So efficient is this house, in fact, that it's off the charts on the Home Energy Rating System Index, the industry

standard for measuring a home's energy efficiency. The lower the number on a scale from 1 to 100, the more efficient is the home. GaiaMa measures a minus 4.

Instead of traditional block construction, it's built with insulating concrete forms (ICFs), a system of interlocking modular units (similar to a dense Styrofoam) that are stacked without cement and then filled with concrete. The forms lock together, not unlike Legos, and help create a reinforced-concrete structure that is both energy-efficient and resistant to natural disasters.

Homes built with ICF construction, explains Sfez, have been shown to withstand winds of up to 250 miles per hour. "This type of home can withstand



BT photos by Silvia Ros

Landscaping is not complete, but don't look for a grassy front yard.

a Category 5 hurricane, like Andrew," he notes, "or a powerful tornado, like the one in Joplin, Missouri."

The heavily insulated structure also improves indoor air quality, fire

protection, and sound absorption, he adds. And the blocks are made from a variety of recycled materials that lower the carbon

Continued on page 42

Gateway Park

Continued from page 38

presenting new design possibilities and showcasing young architectural talent, the competition serves as a catalyst for other developers to improve areas for general public use.

“All the teams showed a great sensitivity to Wynwood’s context and vibe,” says Shulman. “The ideas were quite distinct but very thoughtful, and the final projects had a lot of substance.”

However, Joachim Perez, executive director of DawnTown Miami, notes that some teams didn’t quite get the main idea: “In all competitions, you usually get a small percentage of designers who submit an idea and imagery that may be wonderful, but just not suitable for the goals of the project.”

Third-place winner *Wynwood Commons*, by Solid Objectives Idenburg Liu (SO – IL) of Brooklyn, New York, played into Miami’s affinity for outdoor rooms and screenlike walls. “Their park proposal was considered a beautiful idea by the jury; its main feature was a plaza with a well-organized palm court, surrounded by a screen mesh,” notes Perez. “It also had several features that



Second-place *Graffito Green* incorporates green space into an urban path that references Wynwood’s signature graffiti design elements. The entry was submitted by Meyer + Silberberg Land Architects of Berkeley, California.

responded well to Miami’s climate, like a cooling pond and outdoor game patio.”

Shulman liked the idea of breaking the site into a series of outdoor rooms: “The project is very spatial, very architectural, and would have a lot of presence from the street, and maybe reinterprets the Wynwood Walls idea in a different way.”

The second-place winner, *Graffito Green*, by Meyer + Silberberg Land Architects of Berkeley, California,

featured an urban pathway system that made good use of the neighboring retail building on NW 29th Street. “They did reference graffiti as a way to create an interesting urban path through the park, which was given much praise by the jury,” says Perez.

Adds Shulman: “Given the character of the neighborhood, this pedestrian-street solution, with its mix of paved and green spaces, seems very appropriate.”

Judging for the competition was done “blind,” meaning the judges did not know the identity of the entrants. That made for a moment of astonishment when the winning entry turned out to be *Wynwood Greenhouse* — from the Miami-based team of artist Jim Drain; Roberto Rovira, chair of FIU’s Department of Landscape Architecture; and FIU architecture school professor Nick Gelpi.

The Miami team made a statement different from *Wynwood Commons* and *Graffito Green*. They created a multi-functional park with native grasses, flowers, green walls, a paved pathway, and seating beneath a thin, white aluminum structure embedded with LED lights that will glow at night.

The undulating roof structure has two peaks, a reference to the two old homes originally on the site. The designers describe the *Greenhouse* as a new type of park space for people and nature to thrive. Built-in irrigation and misting systems create welcome microclimates year round.

Two mounds covered in native grasses and wildflowers elevate the site, reminiscent of Everglades tree islands. A garden of native plants will attract butterflies,

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Kitchen Cabinets

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The prior owner, now Schaefer’s tenant, either ignored the notice or didn’t believe it was important. Nor did she sign for certified mail addressed to the owner that contained information about a hearing before the Code Enforcement Board (CEB). When these letters aren’t signed for, public notice is posted inside Village Hall.

Nora Schaefer didn’t see any of these notices because she lived in Morningside and the Village of Miami Shores did not have her permanent address on file for code-violation correspondence. The only mail that made it to Morningside was her garbage bill.

After Schaefer’s hearings before the CEB came and went without her presence, the village placed a lien on the property and ceased to send further correspondence, as is its policy.

Now, fast forward to 2010, when Schaefer was preparing to sell the house and went to Village Hall to perform a lien search.

“I check on every house I own when I go to sell it,” she says. “I once found an open lien on my [personal]



Nora Schaefer: “When a municipality creates ordinances and gives a code enforcement board the power to penalize, it’s dangerous.”

house that was never closed, for a tin shed in the back yard. When I went to the Village Hall clerk, she looked for liens on my Shores house and said there were none.”

Schaefer sent her son-in-law to double check with a follow-up search — the same son-in-law who managed the kitchen work — and he came back with the same answer: all clear.

But when Schaefer’s Realtor, Georgeé Kluck, did a full title search, she found tens of thousands of dollars’ worth of liens. A supervisor for Miami Shores Code Enforcement confirmed that it’s possible to have liens with different departments within the village. The only way to get a comprehensive, definitive answer is to run a full title search, which costs upwards of \$25 and

is normally handled by a professional during the sale process. Walking into Village Hall and asking isn’t enough.

Schaefer says that dealing with the loss of her son and husband was overwhelming, and whether she didn’t fully understand or simply didn’t want to deal with the situation is unclear. But rather than tackle the lien head-on, she took the house off the market and put the whole thing on the back burner.

Three years later, in late 2013, a tree began to drip black residue on the driveway.

The Village of Miami Shores considered it a code violation and issued a citation. Schaefer power-washed it away. The dripping returned, another citation was issued, and more power-washing ensued. There were further violations — hedges that were the wrong height, a stubborn patch in the lawn that just wouldn’t grow, a replacement air handler that wasn’t code-compliant.

During the back-and-forth, Schaefer realized that her kitchen lien had ballooned to nearly \$250,000. The Village also told her she’d been renting the house

Continued on page 48

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8651 NE 10TH COURT

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Extreme Eco

Continued from page 39

footprint and minimize any environmental damage caused by the structure.

Most astounding? GaïaMa was assembled in just 33 days.

The combination of the ICF shell, low-energy glass, and impact-resistant windows increases the energy efficiency by up to four times the current building code requirement, according to the 37-year-old Sfez (pronounced es-fez). Solar panels on the south side of the roof generate power, and whenever there's a solar energy surplus, Florida Power & Light's bi-directional meter runs in reverse. "During the day, I'm generating more energy than I'm using," he says. The home's eight-battery backup works like a generator, should there be a power failure.

Explaining his career path, the French-born-and-educated Sfez, who moved to the U.S. in 2004, says he wanted to use his 14-plus years' experience in real estate to make a positive impact on the planet, and that he found a way — building "green" homes and resorts.

"I was working for a real estate investment fund and was having some health challenges," he recalls, "so I started doing yoga. That brought about awareness about the environment and sustainability."

At the same time, he made some discoveries about himself. "The more I became aware of those things, the less I wanted to be in a suit, around people who only cared about money."

He met an architect who had designed an earth-friendly house, and the seed was planted. In 2011 he founded Urbaneco Development.

He purchased this Biscayne Park residential lot for \$84,000 and began his



Jean Sfez: "During the day, I'm generating more energy than I'm using."

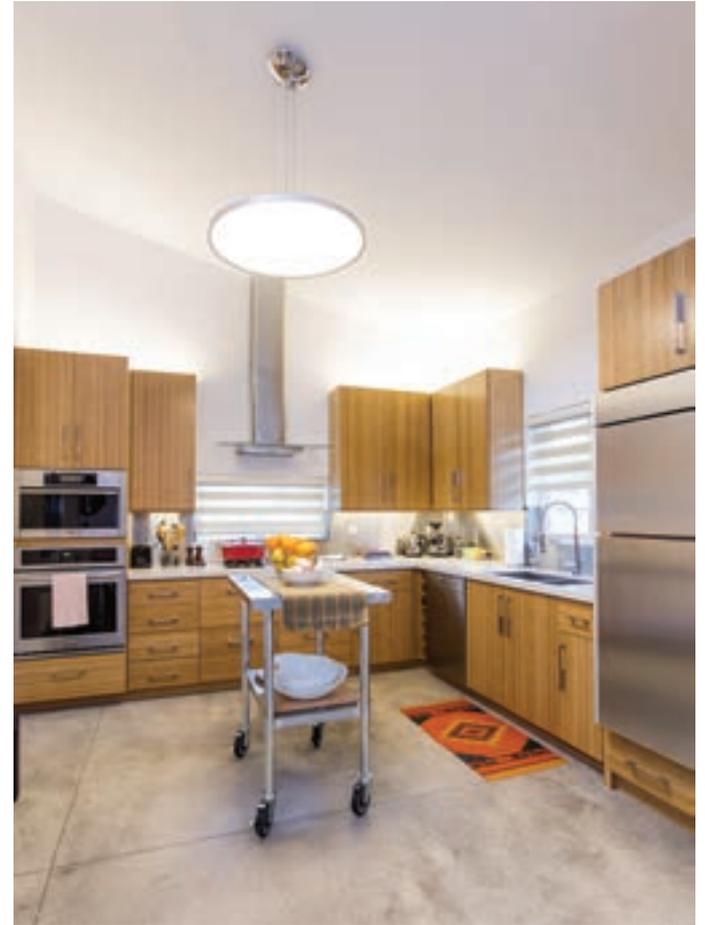
new venture — almost. "The day after I closed on the property," he recalls, "I left and spent a month in India to learn more about yoga and meditation." There he also studied green building, adding, "I was a business guy who wanted to learn more about the earth."

After returning to the United States, he attended a Miami Beach trade show for green builders, where he met Sebastian Eilert, a German-born architect who would ultimately design his ideal home:

"I heard him speak at the show and thought, 'This is the guy I want to design my home.'"

The inside of the GaïaMa resembles a South Florida loft; a large open space, bright, high ceilings, a skylight, and modern finishes; but there's much more than that.

GaïaMa is based on Vastu design principles, which harmonize structures with earthly and cosmic energies. Vastu design is said to enhance the spiritual,



GaïaMa's kitchen features a steam oven and a convection oven, a stovetop with two gas burners and two induction burners, and a low-voltage marine refrigerator.

emotional, and mental quality of a person's daily experience and follows specific "natural laws" for orientation, layout, and dimensions with regard to the client's birth time, exterior door locations, room placement, and height.

"It's the Indian ancestor of feng shui," notes Sfez.

There are skylights around a T-beam at the center of the room that let in natural light and make the three-bedroom, two-bath house feel much grander than



The ICF shell, low-energy glass, and impact-resistant windows increase energy efficiency up to four times building code requirements.

its 1546 square feet.

The main living areas have polished concrete floors. The bedrooms and baths have bamboo flooring in a mahogany shade.

Sfez selected state-of-the-art appliances — a steam oven paired with a separate convection oven; a stovetop with two gas burners and two induction burners; and a low-voltage marine refrigerator, designed for boats. The house has a 500-gallon propane tank that runs the two burners, a water heater, and dryer.

The kitchen and bathroom cabinetry have bamboo doors, quartz counters, sleek sinks, and fixtures that are impressive, but not nearly as impressive as the water that flows through them — two exterior water filters and one interior filter remove all the minerals and fluoride from the standard city drinking water, making it not only much safer to drink, he explains, but unusually refreshing. “It’s the best water in the

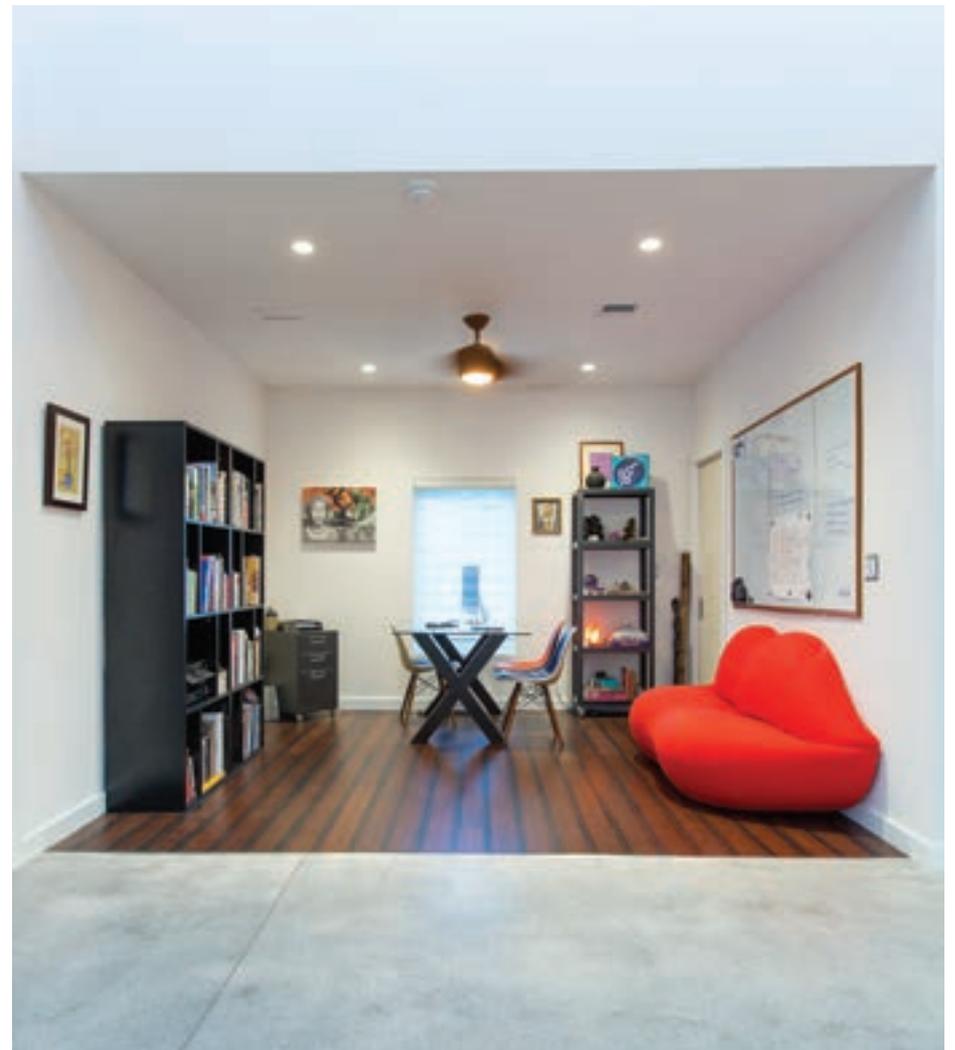
world!” Sfez declares.

The interior of GaiaMa is complete, but the exterior is still in the works. Sfez made plans for the garden based on permaculture, a self-sustainable ecosystem that allows humans, plants, and animals to coexist in harmony. The garden plan will include a fruit forest, featuring clusters of trees and mostly edible companion plants that will protect them from insects.

Among the exotic trees planned for the garden are red custard, persimmon, guanabana, lime, avocado, and mamey. There will also be a vegetable area, an herb spiral, and a pond.

“We’re going to grow a lot of food out there,” says Sfez, opening a light-filtering window shade and exposing the deep lot full of flattened cardboard boxes marking the oak pathway he’ll soon be installing.

“The steppingstones are actually pieces from fallen trees dating back to



By the end of this year, Sfez says, he’ll probably have spent only about \$65 on electricity.

Hurricane Andrew,” he says.

For his landscaping, Sfez hired Urban GreenWorks, a landscaping company whose owners say they are “dedicated to restoring the environmental, physical, and economic health of underserved communities.”

Fairchild Tropical Garden arborist Bob Brennan is helping with tree conservation, trimming, and cutting the

existing shrubbery. The yard will have no lawn, which Sfez says is a waste of space and water. Waste is not part of the plan, unless it is food waste.

“Right now, we’re making compost in those barrels over there,” he says, pointing to a cluster of covered plastic barrels. “We’re collecting food scraps and yard

Continued on page 49



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Four-Wheel Challenge

Continued from page 38

been communicating with the Downtown Development Authority, the City of Miami, the Miami Parking Authority, and Miami Worldcenter partners. “We’re collectively trying to make sure there is a plan,” she notes.

But it isn’t just Miami Worldcenter. Hundreds more parking spaces will be lost when the Chateau Group begins construction on two 700-foot towers on surface lots at 600 and 700 Biscayne Blvd.

Then there are the parking spaces that have already been lost. In August, All Aboard Florida closed four surface lots with 600 spaces along NW 1st Avenue, just west of the future JW Marriott and near downtown’s Government Center, so it can build a three million-square-foot train depot, MiamiCentral, which will include apartments, retail, and offices. Meanwhile, in Brickell, another 750 parking spaces have been lost recently.

“Just within the vicinity of the Mary Brickell Village area, you have five parking garages that have disappeared



All Aboard Florida’s train depot and surrounding high-rise development is being built on land that had been used for parking until recently.

in the span of the last year,” says Mario Maung, president of Park Safe Systems. “High-rises are being developed with new garage space that will be available a year and a half to two years from now.”

The demand for parking, though, is immediate and increasing, even as spaces are disappearing. Aside from the American Airlines Arena and the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, downtown attractions near Biscayne Boulevard include Bayfront Park, Bayside Marketplace, and the newly completed Pérez Art Museum Miami at Museum Park.

Other attractions coming to the waterfront include the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, also at Museum Park, that’s under construction; the 1000-foot observation tower called SkyRise, at Bayside Marketplace; and possibly a major league soccer stadium that retired soccer star David Beckham wants to build somewhere downtown.

Some of the condo, hotel, and retail projects being built in the downtown area will barely provide enough on-site for parking for their own users. Although the JW Marriott will have 1200 parking

spaces, that number will be 30 percent less than the city’s zoning code normally requires for an 1800-room hotel. (The reason: The convention hotel is near the Overtown Metrorail station and the future All Aboard Florida project, which connects a train to Orlando.)

A fact sheet provided by Miami Worldcenter publicist Penton claims there will be 7000 new spaces built within the ten-block project. However, Miami Worldcenter is still negotiating with the Miami Parking Authority (MPA) and the Southeast Overtown Park West Community Redevelopment Agency to use tax dollars to help pay for a 3000-space garage.

Art Noriega, CEO of the MPA, recently told *Miami Today* that he hoped to have a proposal by this month. (Noriega didn’t return phone calls or e-mails from the *BT*.) Thomas Jelke, board chairman of the MPA, says Noriega and his staff are still negotiating with Miami Worldcenter. As for the loss of parking during construction, he says, “I know they’re working on creating a comprehensive

Continued on page 49

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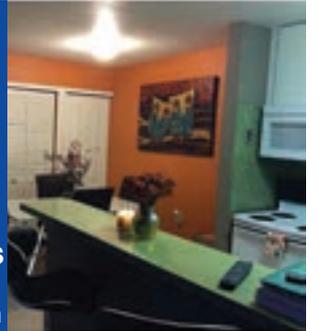


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Community News: BISCAYNE CORRIDOR



Wynwood Commons, by Solid Objectives Idenburg Liu of Brooklyn, New York, placed third in the competition with a design that partitions the site into a series of outdoor “rooms” surrounded by screen mesh.

Gateway Park

Continued from page 40

with nectar plants on one side of the structure and host plants to showcase the entire butterfly life cycle on the other side. Modular butterfly planters could also be distributed to other sites in the neighborhood to make more butterfly habitats.

The park design features “furniture” in the form of pocket benches carved out of the perimeter walls, and cut benches carved into the massive butterfly mounds. Communal swings are suspended from the roof, creating places for visitors to experience weightlessness, by hovering above the ground with the butterflies. Additionally there are large, movable sets of seating, scattered organically along the walls like living room furniture.

The jury thought the design had a lot of things going for it — grand in ambition but using simple materials and construction techniques.

“The greenhouse is a useful contradiction on which to base a project in Miami,” says Shulman. “We are a greenhouse! The winning project is very tropical, also urban, a demonstration of how we can make outdoor space very rich and livable and multifunctional.”

The winning plans have an advantage over previous design competitions that never moved off the drawing board. Tony Cho, president and CEO of Metro 1 Properties, who conceived the Wynwood Gateway competition, intends to have the park built. “Right now the plan is to have Metro 1 finance

the bulk of it,” says Cho. “We’re looking for additional public and private support so we don’t cut any corners. The estimated cost to build this particular winning design is going to be more than \$1 million.”

Cho says that while there has been no official reaction to the competition results, the City of Miami has been supportive. He is still in discussion with the city over his plan for a public-private partnership with Metro 1, committing to the park for at least five years. “There has been positive feedback from the City of Miami, which could contribute operating costs in the long term.”

Cho has taken his request for reciprocity to the city regarding a transfer of the site’s development rights to another developer, a reduction in parking requirements on other sites belonging to Metro 1, and rezoning the park site to remain as a park as long as market forces direct.

Reviewing the last few months of the Wynwood Gateway Park project, Cho notes that the competition showed how Wynwood could inspire brand equity and interest from around the world. “It definitely demonstrated growing public support for public-interest projects,” he says. “The competition achieved very high-quality solutions from really interesting groups, and I believe we ended up with the best idea. The competition really accomplished its goal.”

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com




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Community News: BISCAYNE CORRIDOR

Kitchen Cabinets

Continued from page 40

for 13 years without paying “business tax” — around \$50 a year.

Schaefer says she went from feeling harassed to feeling abused by the same village that made national news when it forced a couple to rip out a mature vegetable garden in their front yard.

It was time to deal with this mess. Another motivating factor was that Schaefer’s name was on the deed to a son’s house in Biscayne Park, and in order to refinance, he needed his mother to clear her liens. According to Schaefer, the first two lawyers she approached wouldn’t take her case before the Code Enforcement Board (CEB). Finally, Christopher Kelley of North Miami agreed to represent her.

In early 2014, they went before the CEB and asked how to bring the property into compliance. First, she was required to hire an architect, who charged \$1500 to produce a full set of drawings for the kitchen cabinets. She then was required to hire a licensed contractor, electrician, and plumber, and all of them had to pull permits from the village — electrical, plumbing, structural, and overall building permits for all the work as it was done in 2001.

The work Schaefer did to the house was all code-compliant; it was just done without permits. All she needed to update were the smoke detectors. Between 2001 and 2014, the village had made it a requirement to have hardwired smoke detectors in every room and hallway, and a smoke/CO² detector in the garage. This cost Schaefer another \$2000.

And just to be safe, she was forced to spend a few hundred dollars on a structural engineer, who confirmed that the cabinets hanging on the wall for the past 13 years wouldn’t fall down.

The total cost to find out that her crew did great work? About \$7500. And while this should have been the end of the story, it isn’t.

Even after spending thousands of dollars on professionals who decided that the work in her kitchen was code-compliant, she still had to go before the CEB for her punitive hearing.

In May 2014, Schaefer stood before the board with her attorney and offered \$2000 to settle the case, but the board felt it wasn’t enough. She returned in August and offered \$5000, but the board still wasn’t satisfied with this amount, and voted 3-2 against it.

Attorney Kelley has made a career out of appearing before code enforcement boards and says he has no interest in crossing this particular board by commenting for a news story. Taxpayers do not vote for Miami Shores CEB members; they’re council-appointed to unlimited three-year terms. Kelley says he’s watched attorneys for national banks threaten to sue the CEB and the village for refusing to remove liens from an asset they’re trying to discharge.

“Are there better ways for the board to communicate?” he asks. “Yes. Sometimes you don’t know there’s a problem until you’re ready to sell and they do a lien search.”

Because the notification process isn’t aggressive, he explains, violation fines can quietly snowball over time, as they did for Schaefer. “It’s a settlement and mitigation process,” Kelley says. “The final amount negotiated between the board and the property owner factors in their ability to pay, willingness to work with the board to resolve the issue, past violations, and the severity and effect of the problem.”

When Nora Schaefer came before the board for a third time in September, they agreed that \$10,000 was an appropriate amount to fine a widowed senior citizen who’d installed kitchen cabinets and a tile floor 13 years ago.

Schaefer paid the fine within 30 days but feels no sense of relief or closure. In fact, she refused to cooperate with *Biscayne Times* until after her case was settled, fearing reprisal from the CEB. She lives in a state of fear, believing herself to be more vulnerable than ever to what she considers harassment.

Code enforcement, Schaefer says, should be motivated by public safety and maintaining the community’s value. The Miami Shores CEB, she argues, is more focused on collecting permit fees and issuing fines than on educating taxpayers and helping them maintain their properties.

“When a municipality creates ordinances and gives a code enforcement board the power to penalize, it’s dangerous,” she says. “You don’t own your house. They tell you what you’re going to do with *your* house.”

Now that the house is free and clear, one might assume that she will sell it and wipe her hands of Miami Shores, but it’s not that simple. Schaefer is in her 80s and has a lot of money tied up in the property.

“That house is my retirement,” she says.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

Four-Wheel Challenge

Continued from page 44

plan so things don't get affected too much when multiple events are going on."

Finding a parking space isn't the only thing that's becoming increasingly difficult. Traffic congestion is horrendous south of 20th Street when an event at either the arena or the Adrienne Arsht Center (or both) is being held. It'll be even worse during and after Miami Worldcenter's construction, when lanes will be periodically shut down. NE 9th Street between NE 1st and 2nd avenues will be closed permanently, as it will be covered by the Mall at Miami Worldcenter. And a pedestrian promenade will replace vehicular NE 7th Street between N. Miami Avenue and NE 2nd Avenue.

Maung of Park Safe Systems remembers the traffic backups caused by a beautification project on NE 14th Street two years ago. Closing off NE 7th and 9th streets, which are often used by traffic during events at the arena, "is definitely going to create havoc."

Javier Betancourt, deputy director of the DDA, is sure that the spaces lost by Miami Worldcenter's development will be replaced by the project's developers. "We're going to have an interim period where we'll be short parking," he admits. "All the more reason to encourage transit and alternative modes of transportation."

Carlos Cruz-Casas, transportation manager for the City of Miami, says the city is preparing for the impact of Miami Worldcenter. "During the construction of the Brickell area, we have a biweekly meeting with all the contractors to make sure we can address traffic and mobility," Cruz-Casas says. "We are going to be doing something similar when All Aboard Florida, the Expo Center, and Miami Worldcenter break ground."

Cruz-Casas adds that Miami is working on an event-management transportation plan with the DDA. As part of that plan, the

city will be expanding its trolley system, is implementing a bike rental program, and will be encouraging users to use the Metro-rail and Metromover systems.

Still, folks living outside of downtown have to park somewhere. Andrew Mirmelli, president of M&M parking, currently rents Miami Worldcenter's lots for parking. He says the new owners will give him 30 days to vacate when the time comes to build. Then Mirmelli will simply use lots he runs near the Adrienne Arsht Center six blocks north of the arena. Owing to their distance from the arena, those lots are not used very much by Miami Heat fans. That will change once Miami Worldcenter construction begins, Mirmelli predicts.

But what about days and nights when there are Miami Heat games *and* big performances at the Adrienne Arsht Center? Won't those lots overflow? "Without LeBron James," Mirmelli answers, "I don't see that happening."

Maung does. With or without James, "Miami has a very strong following with the Miami Heat, and they'll still attract a lot of fans from all over."

As parking lots disappear, prices will no doubt rise. "All the independent parking lots," Maung says, "are going to be increasing as demand exceeds supply."

Brad Knoefler, owner of Grand Central, a performance space at 697 N. Miami Ave., thinks it's about time for prices to rise. "Miami is one of the cheapest places to park in America," he says. Right now it costs \$20 to park just a few blocks away from the arena. In Chicago, New York, or San Francisco that's what people pay for parking much farther away from sports stadiums.

Compelling people to walk longer distances from the arena will ultimately be good for downtown business. It'll force some people to explore downtown, Knoefler predicts.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

Extreme Eco

Continued from page 43

waste, and covering it with ashes that create the chemical reaction."

Sfez also visits Arch Creek Park regularly to collect horse manure for fertilizer.

Once the garden is established, it will require very little water after the first six months. Still, he does plan to install a 4000-gallon rain catchment system for irrigation.

Saving energy requires an investment, and Sfez estimates he will have spent \$463,800, or about \$300 per square foot, on the house by the time he finishes. Add another \$20,000 for the garden.

But he already sees savings on the horizon. By the end of this year, he says, he'll probably have spent only about \$65 on electricity.

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Over and Out

Deep down, I didn't really believe I'd be able to do it, but I thought I'd at least try

By Jen Karetnick
BT Contributor

“Give it a try.” “Try it once.” “It can't hurt to try.” I'm not sure where those ideas came from — probably my raised-from-bootstraps parents — but they've been my mottos my entire life. Though they seem like common sense, for me, I'm not sure they've been healthy ones.

Where most people would try, perhaps fail, and then do something else, I'm not built like that. If I fail, I do it again — twice. A third time. I make sure I get it right. And then I add something else on top of it.

I'm what's called a classic over-achiever. I've been this way since my

school days, when I'd play sports on multiple teams; participate in the chorale and instrumental music programs; work several jobs at one time; and, of course, study. On a typical day in high school, I'd wear four different uniforms: soccer team, band/orchestra/chorus, soccer referee (I was certified by FIFA at 16), and waitress. Then I'd go to a party.

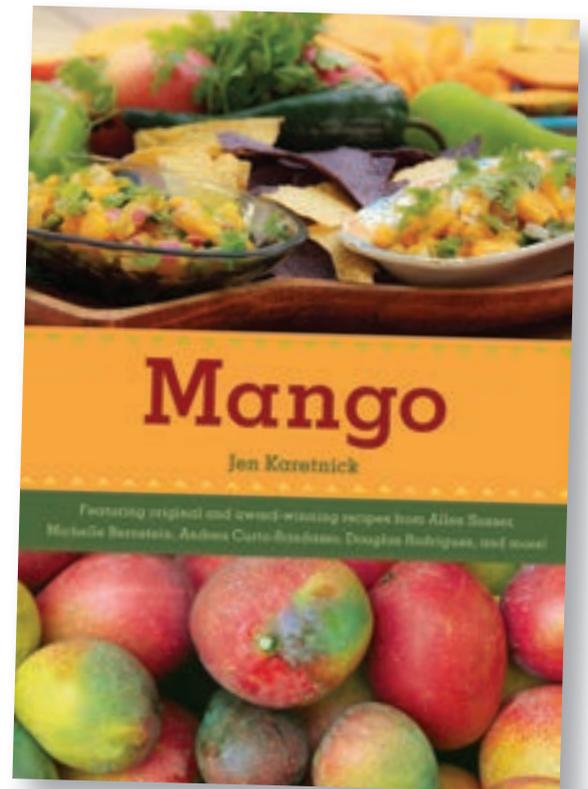
College and grad school — both grad schools, because why get one master's degree when you can earn two? — were more of the same: take classes, play sports, play music, work several jobs at once. And party.

Eat? No time. Sleep? You know when you do that.

I've changed only in that I've replaced my own sports with watching

my kids' games (and working out); music with poetry; studying with teaching; restaurant jobs with food-travel writing; and partying with doctors' visits.

Regarding the last: I began suffering in my 20s from an immune deficiency and autoimmune problems. As some family members and colleagues take great pains to tell me, I don't usually look sick even when I can't get out of bed. My diseases are “invisible,” and sufferers like me who are afraid to go on disability have to prove we're just as good as anybody else. That's another reason I do twice as much in half the time. I simply can't afford for others to think I'm not up to the challenge.



So when I knew I had two books being published in the fall, an accident of fate right when school started again (with a third released two months before), I thought I would at least try to promote

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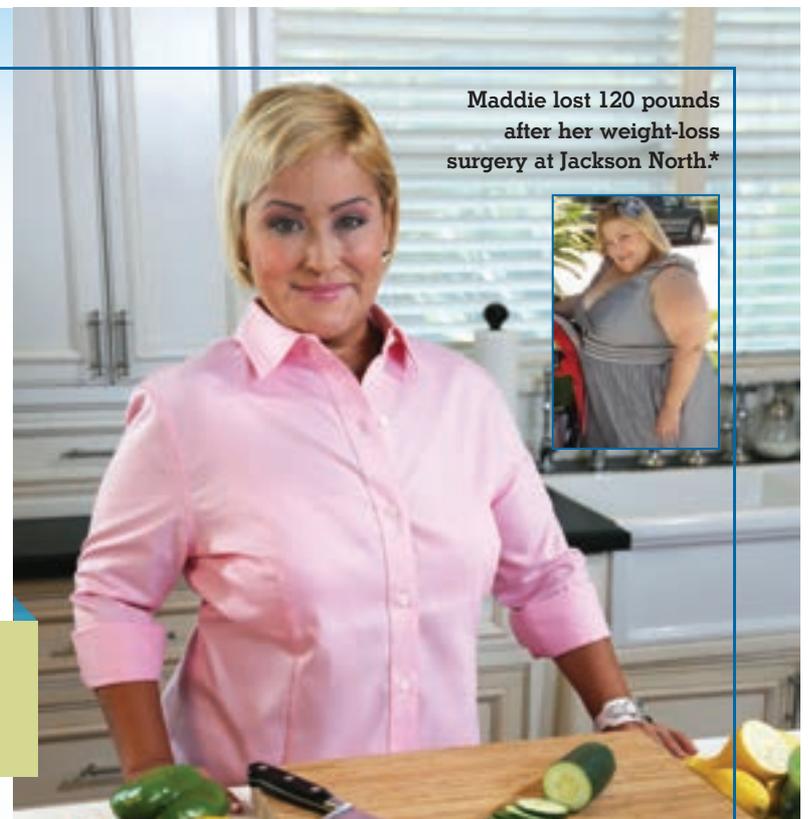
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them, parent my teens, take care of the house and pets, teach full time, work out, and freelance.

Guess what? I've failed. And I can't try anymore.

I don't attend my kids' games and events. I'm constantly late on deadlines. The house is falling apart. I've unintentionally lost weight (normally something the latent teenage anorexic in me would celebrate, but being underweight looks horrendous on a middle-age woman). My immune system, I was shocked to find out, is currently functioning at less than ten percent. I'm now susceptible to developing lymphoma if I don't wise up and take action — which is to say, take inaction.

I hear my immunologist applauding from a distance. My husband is clapping right next to my ear.

All this is to say that after working for editor Jim Mullin since 1992, when he hired me for my very first job as restaurant critic at Miami *New Times* right after Hurricane Andrew, here is where it ends. This is my last column for *Biscayne Times*. After seven years, I will no longer be the Miami Shores neighborhood

correspondent. I'm simply going to be a Shores resident.

This doesn't mean you won't see me in print, of course. When I left *New Times* in 2004 and would later run into readers, I'd get the strangest questions from them. "I haven't seen your byline," they'd say. "Did you quit writing?"

Um, no. I had moved on — to books, other papers, magazines, websites. Today you'll still be able to read my restaurant reviews in *Miami Magazine*, where I also have worked for the past seven years. You can find my freelance work all over the Internet; I'm currently blogging for Virgin Atlantic Airlines and contributing to *TheLatinKitchen.com*, in addition to other sites.

Most important, I'm out there promoting the products of my first loves, food and poetry: My first solo cookbook, *Mango*, and my debut full-length book of poetry, *Brie Season*, which are all poems about food and drink.

Forcing myself to accept that failure is an option might be the first step toward health. But doing what I love, and not what I feel obligated to do, is the biggest one.

I love living here in Mango House, and in our little Village. But I have not been happy writing about Miami Shores for some time now.

I do want to leave you with some final thoughts about the community, however, because you will be seeing some changes. And not just from my replacement, who will be concentrating more on civic affairs, but in the Village itself.

For starters, O Cinema at MTC Miami Shores has started family-friendly matinees on Saturday mornings (also some Sundays and holidays). Films like *The Grinch* and *Nanny McPhee* will play at 11:00 a.m. Now, if only there were family-friendly cafés next door to take the little ones to afterward.

Ah, but there will be. A new sewer system is a fact. The infrastructure is being prepared. I've been hearing April from those involved in installation, so get ready for street construction.

So are high-tech fiber-optic cables capable of providing 10,000 mbps Internet service to NE 2nd Avenue. Like sewers, world-class Internet service is a big draw for real-life, brick-and-mortar businesses who may want to set up shop here.

Naturally, this has led right back to that decades-old debate: How should downtown Miami Shores revitalize itself? What should it look like? Where are all those 1998 studies and charrettes the village council repeatedly shot down, and are they still valid?

If you want answers to these questions, and you really want to know what's in the winds of change for Miami Shores — and who's blowing it — request to join the Facebook group of Miami Shores Village People. This is our LGBT and LGBT-friendly social media group. The people who belong to it are the ones, I have found, who are the most in touch with, and the least apathetic about, the real world of our Village, who continue to be as interested in Miami Shores as a place to live comfortably and happily as I have been.

Jen Karetznick reads at the Miami Book Fair International on November 22, 10:30 a.m. in Room 8102 (Brie Season) and 12:30 p.m. in Room 8202 (Mango). Follow her on Facebook or Twitter @Kavetchnik.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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A Capital Idea!

Did you hear the one about the secession proposal?

By **Jay Beskin**
BT Contributor

I confess I'm in quite a state, although I'm not quite sure what state it is. Well, I grew up (longer ago than I care to admit) in the State of Illinois, and I studied for a time in the District of Columbia, which is not a state at all, and finally wended my way down to the great State of Florida.

That used to be a Southern state before we Chicago and New York types invaded, but Florida has learned to embrace all the points of the compass. You have to be a real cosmopolitan — or perhaps a cosmonaut — to live here successfully, but we would never want it any other way.

Now from the City of South Miami comes the news of a nascent secessionist

movement. A resolution was passed by the city commission calling for separating the 24 southernmost counties from the rest of the state, leaving South Florida with autonomous statehood. The name South Florida is more than a bit boring, conjuring up images of the rather arbitrary divisions of Carolina and Dakota into two states with the same last name.

If we must become our own discrete territory, surely we can come up with a less discreet designation. How about something on the order of Sunglow? Maybe Shangrila. Serendipity. Fortuna. Even Kimkardashiana. Anything more imaginative and evocative than South Florida.

Fox News commentator and former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee joked that the scariest part of this plan is



the prospect of two Florida vote counts every presidential election. In that spirit, we might be advised to name the

breakaway state Hangingchadville, and give out scholarships for young people to attend Electoral College.

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The christening issue aside, I suspect we're all in. It's kind of embarrassing to live in a state with a capital named Tallahassee. The name means "old town" in a Native American dialect — frankly, it's all Creek to me — or at least, that's what a tour guide sternly told me after I suggested it was a slightly corrupted version of Tall Hayseed. I just know I hate driving 350 miles up the coast and finding I'm still in Florida. I need the rewarding feeling of crossing a state line after about 200 miles.

The South Miami initiative offered as rationale the fact that northern Florida is 120 feet above sea level, while the southern part averages less than 15 feet above. It's not clear just how sea level and statehood interact, unless one is referring to a state of undress, which does tend to increase with proximity to the sea.

Of course, the downside of adding another state to the union is the necessity of adding two more senators to the mix. As it is, both parties have already conspired to put the 100 sleepest characters in the country together in that chamber for a prolonged communal nap. If we elect Gloria Estefan and Jennifer Lopez

and send them up there, maybe those guys will finally show some signs of life.

The big question will be to identify potential areas of conflict between the two entities. For example, both sides will probably try to foist Disney off on the other. We've all had our fill of Mickey and will be happy to see the pesky rodent catch some fresh ears on the other side of the border. Alas, this problem seems unsolvable; we may be forced to share the burden between the two states. Or perhaps a tradeoff: "I'll take Disney if you take the spring-breakers!"

Another face-off may occur when all those pudgy guys with the white beards begin to clog the I-95 on their way to converge on Key West for the annual Ernest Hemingway lookalike contest. Northern Florida may vote to restrict their passage, forcing them to take to the water. Imagine Cuban-style rafts and inner tubes bearing all these overgrown, overaged teddy bears reenacting *The Old Men and the Sea*.

The issue everyone can see looming large is the venue of the capital city for the fledgling state. South Miami is clearly angling for that role by floating the proposition, but it is far from being

a natural choice. If I may be heard on the subject, I'd like to place the name of Aventura in nomination for this august position. Our supply of know-it-alls and busybodies should be more than adequate to staff all the appropriate government departments.

Young men keen to work in state government will be thrilled to hear that Aventura is 54 percent women versus Tallahassee's 52 percent (although there's no point in mentioning that our average age is 46, as opposed to 26 for Tallahassee). We have a great mall, and you can meet James Caan or George Hamilton on the golf course, so what else could one ask for in life? Mustn't be greedy, you know.

I can see the lobbyists now, coming from near and far, waving dinner vouchers and concert tickets, and prattling on about building something or demolishing something, or planting something or uprooting something...or something! They'll be eager to corrupt our incorruptible politicians with these petty gifts — and boy, are they in for a surprise when they're rebuffed by our men and women of honor. Our guys would never sell out for such small potatoes.

True, our housing units go for more than \$400,000 apiece, and bureaucrats are not accustomed to writing big checks with their own money. The solution is to build up Dixie Highway. Where there's a will, there is a way.

We're big sports here in Aventura, and if we don't get our way, we can still participate in the excitement of the new state. If they insist on making Key Largo or Boca Raton the capital, we can learn to live with that news. We can sit on the beach and do our crossword puzzles without pouting overmuch.

If the seat of government would rather perch elsewhere, who are we to give it a mean pinch? We're comfortable in our own skin — our tanned and wrinkled skin — and we don't need to take our validation from external sources.

Go ahead, stick your stinkin' state capital wherever you please. If you do not appreciate greatness, beauty, grace, class, location, location, location, that is your problem. Why should we care if some other municipality cashes in? Unless it's Hallandale. Then we'll declare all-out war!

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To Busk Is Not to Beg

An open-and-shut case — guitar case, that is — for donations

By **Adam Schachner**
BT Contributor

Late last year the *BT* offered a heads up about an experimental festival marrying music and transit: Buskerfest. (See “Downtown Miami Hosts a Moveable Fest,” December 2013). This collaboration between the Downtown Development Authority, the civic innovation hub WhereByUs, and downtown business establishments populated the entrances to inner-loop Metromover stations with a motley crew of performers.

A free treat for unsuspecting and pleasantly surprised transit riders and savvy socialites alike, Buskerfest brought out the best of downtown’s nighttime potential. The ambitious event paid off with support and enthusiasm, and now, one year later, the buskers are back and more mobilized than ever.

A second annual festival is scheduled for December 12, along the inner loop during evening travel time. This year

it comes alongside the unveiling of a draft city ordinance to clarify the rights of street performers. The model code affirms Miami’s prohibitive stance on panhandlers, which incidentally limits street performances, as well.

The music and revelry will again aim to draw passing foot traffic and local music lovers, while a subtext on free-speech rights will resonate through a catchy appeal. After all, who doesn’t want more free entertainment?

“Every community can benefit from performing in public in some capacity,” declares Justin Trieger, event founder and technical director for distance education and new media initiatives with the New World Symphony, in an interview with the *BT*. “We are advocating for passive and peaceful ways of asking for donations, such as an open guitar case.”

Buskerfest originated in 2013, when WhereByUs assembled interested locals to discuss sustainability and living in



BT photo by Adam Schachner

Popular UM buskers Avocado Estate play outside the Miami Center for Architecture and Design during last month’s community forum.

downtown Miami. Trieger attended, along with Amy San Pedro, Buskerfest’s co-founder and South Florida cultural preservationist with the Wolfson Moving Images Archive. Tasked with brainstorming ways to activate downtown art and culture, San Pedro tells the *BT* that the conversation ended definitively: “We thought, ‘Live music in places where people can hear it throughout the day.’ That discussion started Buskerfest.”

San Pedro’s work with the Wolfson Archive involves the digitization of media “artifacts” for cultural posterity, from stock footage to home videos. In reviewing hours of diverse historical material, San Pedro has come across the gamut of Miami culture, cataloging an evolution of creative expression.

“I’ve seen from the archives old footage of street closures and outdoor concerts,” she explains. “There was an

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emphasis on using the diversity and culture here to showcase different performances, especially music. But I never saw individual footage of buskers. We're following the lineage of Miami's rich musical history, but adding an element which is in other cities."

The co-founders cite an extensive history of street musicians and serenaders dating back to ancient Rome. They frame the art of busking as a community service and artistic draw for locals and tourists alike. Bringing more busking to the region is alluring and, more profoundly, a fundamental free-speech right.

The city's current panhandling ordinance was established in 2008 and amended to widely expand the prohibited zones in 2010. As it stands, the legislation places hefty emphasis on a perceived blight involving solicitation downtown, with claims that it "damages otherwise positive experiences of the tourists and general public visiting the area."

The law assumes that visitors will not return downtown if they encounter opportunistic undesirables, although it offers no substantial study or reasoning. The language is quite specific, however, declaring

that "the safety of the public is threatened by panhandlers." The law mandates strict grounds for enforcement, but no distinction between performing and begging.

To clarify the distinction by drafting a model ordinance, the Buskerfest team brought in legal counsel. Justin Wales is an attorney with Carlton Fields Jordan Burt — one of Miami's First Amendment litigation firms. The trio scoured the city's code to find a tenable alternative to its broad language.

According to Wales, who explains the conflict via e-mail, current panhandling curbs also prohibit street performance, which stems from "misinformation and misunderstanding the community has about their rights under the First Amendment, and the unwillingness by some (including, unfortunately, some law enforcement officers) to recognize that 'panhandling,' the act of begging for money, is fundamentally and constitutionally different from 'busking,' which is the act of performing in a public space for donations."

While Wales acknowledges there may not be a history of arrests among street performers, he works downtown and has seen officers shoo away artists who, as buskers,

are technically acting within their rights.

Trieger, San Pedro, and Wales hatched a plan to rectify the lack of information. Calling on business owners, developers, concerned residents, artists, and other interested locals, they hosted last month's Busk or Bust at downtown's Miami Center for Architecture and Design — a free evening of libations from Elwood's Gastropub; waffles from Mad Chiller Coffee; folk songs delivered via violin, cello, and banjo from the UM student band Avocado Estate, a hit at last year's Buskerfest; and, finally, a presentation on the proposed ordinance. (I imagine more people would participate in civic engagement if municipal procedures included music and snacks.)

Trieger and Wales offered assurances on a range of topics and questions that members of their audience brought up. They assuaged concerns that permitting buskers will encourage panhandling.

"There's enough in [the model ordinance] to make a discernible analysis between panhandling and street performance," says Trieger. "If they are aggressively seeking donations, or following people down the street, shouting at them,

demanding money, that's a violation of existing code. We're not making [the current code] ineffective — we're carving out a little space in the legal code to state street performers are okay and a benefit."

After input and careful revision, the model ordinance will be offered to the city commission. The team aspires to keep the effort moving, eventually taking it to the county.

Busking as a regulated activity is a hallowed tradition in other cities, such as Boston and New York, where balanced codes allow artists to perform in certain locations, such as transit stations, and free access to unobstructed public space, adding brilliant spontaneity to daily travel. Miami should be no different.

When Buskerfest returns next month, it will continue to embrace last year's momentum by collaborating with transit. Mixing artistry with a vision for downtown, this year's festival promises to sustain the music by offering more than a street corner song: We've been invited to help rewrite the laws on public art.

Anything you'd like to add?

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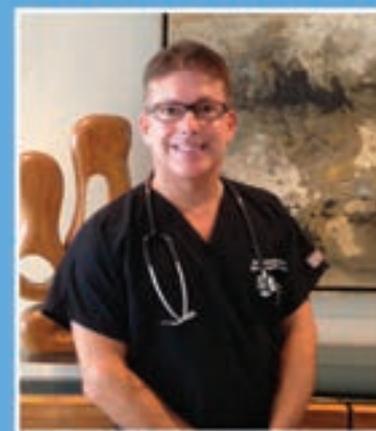
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Push and Pushback

Biscayne Landing's developers pack the house and stack the deck

By **Mark Sell**
BT Contributor

Biscayne Landing's spinners were out in force at the October 14 North Miami City Council meeting.

The developers, Oleta Partners, flexed muscle in their effort to persuade the city to sell them 50.6 acres of its 184-acre parcel for \$20 million, even if neither the council nor the contract was ready. Outside the overflowing chambers, super-lobbyist Ron Book led the pack working the room for Oleta.

This was serious business. Oleta had filled the chamber with laborers, subcontractors, educators, and even a clergyman to urge council members to vote yes. After three hours, however, the council voted to continue discussion until October 28. Councilwoman Carol Keys, a title lawyer, sounded the alarm

on the deal, which most of the council did not have time to read.

The next morning, Oleta Partners, disappointed, shut down Biscayne Landing's mixed-use development project, putting more than 190 workers on furlough, some of them the very people who had pleaded for their jobs the night before.

By the time you read this, there may well be a deal. The new mayor, as of November 4, will be either Dr. Smith Joseph or former Mayor Kevin Burns, filling the unexpired two-year term of Lucie Tondreau, who was removed in May after her mail fraud indictment unrelated to city business. (Yet another mayoral election comes up in May, this time for a full two-year term.)

Why the rush? Was it the November 6 deadline facing the developer on yet another financing extension? The project,

already 18 months behind schedule, is at least three years from producing revenue. Was it to beat the November 4 mayoral election? Our hunch is yes on both counts. The stormy 2009-2013 reign of Andre Pierre taught Oleta Partners about mayoral caprice.

Was the worker furlough a stunt? A message to lenders that Oleta is watching its nickels? A way to show the city that the gloves were off? Was it all of the above?

Perhaps, but Oleta Partners, as of this writing, was mum.

So let's try to peel the onion, distinguish fact from spin, and examine the political and economic dynamics at play.



The Biscayne Landing property lies within the orange boundary lines.

It's clear that the developers are aiming straight at the Creole-speaking community at the center of North Miami politics. The room was packed with workers and student

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trainees — a heavily Haitian-American crowd — holding sheets of paper that read, “Show Us the Jobs.”

The professionals, residents, and subcontractors often spoke in snappy talking points, repeating the words “progress” and “jobs.” One earned applause by calling North Miami a city of “process, not progress.”

The workers pleading for their livelihoods were less polished but powerful. Overarching themes were that the city had dithered long enough; that the \$20 million property appraisal, based on a 99-year lease agreed to in 2012, was fine; and that jobs, families, and futures were at stake.

It was a scene straight from the corporate PR playbook, borrowing organizing techniques from the 1930s to advocate for \$500,000 and \$700,000 luxury condos in a city with a median household income of about \$35,000 a year.

“Affordable housing” on the property is off the table for now, and perhaps forever. The location is too good, the land too valuable, and the development costs too high to accommodate such housing.

Although workers — and indeed most people — couldn’t afford to live

at Biscayne Landing, Oleta Partners is doing its bit as a good corporate citizen, partnering with schools such as Turner Tech for vocational training. Oleta estimates that it is sinking at least \$125 million into infrastructure, utilities, cleanup, and preparation of the land above the former toxic dump.

On the other side of the issue stands a parade of residents, lawyers, former Mayor Frank Wolland, and developer James Tate, all of whom oppose the sale on the terms presented, calling it a bad deal. Some said \$60 million for the land is more like it. Tate mentioned \$100 million.

Tate had rushed to the meeting after watching the proceedings on streaming video. He’s no slouch, either, as president of Tate Capital and a partner of Jorge Pérez (most recently on 1400 Biscayne) and downtown landholder Sergio Rok. He’s the son of renowned developer and banker Stanley Tate, who remains as chairman.

Formidable as Tate is, however, his match in this fight is Richard LeFrak, age 69, head of the family-owned LeFrak Organization, founded in 1901, one of New York City’s biggest apartment developers,

and a 75 percent partner in Oleta. He is worth an estimated \$6.6 billion.

Everyone agrees LeFrak is the best group to pull off Biscayne Landing. Like Tate, LeFrak scooped up distressed South Florida property in the recession and did well. LeFrak also created Newport, a master-planned community that has transformed the once-benighted Jersey City skyline into a showplace on a contaminated waterfront site. (Check out newportnj.com.)

LeFrak and Oleta Partners present a far better credit risk than do the 190 workers going without as they ask for their own loan extensions. Both city and developer want to get a deal done, and the city is under no obligation to sell the land. It’s one thing to bluff, play chicken, suspend work, or even litigate. It is quite another to walk away altogether.

The \$20 million figure, based on an average of three independent “leasehold” appraisals from star appraisers, wasn’t pulled out of the air, even if, as Tate and others insist, the appraisal premises are flawed.

“Leasehold” is the key word, because the city owns the land and leases it to the developers for 99 years, with a 99-year

option for renewal, all of which lowers an appraisal valuation. The appraisals excluded projected tax revenues from the 3000 condos the developer plans to build. The developer’s estimate is \$45 million a year if condos, and \$15 million if rentals. (Oleta insists on condos; they make more money.) The city’s entire budget is around \$60 million.

As of the October delay, the spine road linking NE 143rd and Biscayne with NE 151st Street was well along. The plan was to open it by the end of 2015.

Warren Henry was still planning three car dealerships near the corner of 151st and Biscayne.

The 194,000 cubic yards of contaminated fill the city ordered removed are still there. Oleta is in no hurry.

My hunch: The vast Biscayne Landing project will happen. There’s money to be made, and the LeFraks can play the long game, provided they can beat rising sea levels over the 197 years remaining on the lease and option. They did not get and stay rich over the past 113 years by losing money.

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Giddy for This Vision of Shorecrest

Let's hear it for a 79th Street renaissance

By Ken Jett
BT Contributor

Amid deserved celebration for new and newly renovated businesses in the MiMo Historic District, the nonprofit MiMo Biscayne Association (MBA) has been working feverishly to secure letters of support for a re-envisioned streetscape that adds landscaped medians, more pedestrian crosswalks, and on-street parking.

All this circling of the wagons is presumably being done to avoid a repeat of the previous FDOT plan outcomes for the same area — wherein differing opinions resulted in what we have now: a freeway. However, I've seen the future and it is 79th Street!

MBA's new plan focuses only on the needs of the MiMo District. But the

traffic calming could create a bottleneck and/or speeding zone in Shorecrest, where the plan stops. In addition, the plan would likely compete for the same public funds as the traffic reconfiguration that is *not* part of the current resurfacing project along NE 79th Street.

The current FDOT project will result in some pleasant landscaping in our downtown Shorecrest area, with mid-block pedestrian crosswalks, on-street parking, and curb extensions ("bump outs") to calm traffic. Wait! Wait! Maybe the MiMo Biscayne Association has seen the same future that I've seen.

From pioneering early investors in this recent upturn, like Yasmine Kotb, chef/owner of Mina's Mediterraneo restaurant, to long-timers like Alex Richter, the chef/owner of Royal Bavarian



Courtesy of Seth Bramson

The once and future NE 79th Street: This undated photo from the collection of Seth Bramson shows the popular Juniors Restaurant at the corner of NE 79th Street and Biscayne Boulevard.

Schnitzel Haus, I hear excitement about this underdeveloped roadway that flows through the heart of Shorecrest. A look at the property appraiser's website will show that some properties have changed hands recently, which leads one to speculate about what may be in the hopper.

And all indicators — from the soon-to-open bayfront Shorecrest Luxury Apartments to the shell of the new CVS

at Midpoint Plaza (formerly Biscayne Plaza), and from plans for the old INS building to Avra Jain's design for Magnum Lounge — point to 79th Street as the future of the Upper Eastside. The buzz is loud and bright.

Giddy excitement is not limited to 79th Street. There is a long-awaited renewal happening along Biscayne Boulevard between the Little River Canal and

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87th Street, too. It doesn't have streetscaping as part of its realized future yet. But why shouldn't a comprehensive approach, a communitywide proposal that would fix all outstanding roadway issues, be undertaken as one seamless project that encompasses the MBA concerns, traffic reconfiguration of 79th and 82nd streets, Biscayne Boulevard streetscaping, and calming above 77th Street? Hmmm?

The new antique mall shops at 87th Street are going up quicker than the CVS. Property owners along this corridor appear to be changing, too. Add this to the commuter rail station proposed for Shorecrest, and the future unfolds.

Some may not like the future I see, but fighting against change is sometimes a fool's errand. So bear with me for a bit. Starting at NE 79th Street and the FEC tracks, imagine a commuter rail stop. High-rise condos and apartments spring up from the east side of the Little River canal to act as a bookend to the Shorecrest Luxury Apartments on the bay. I think we'll see these buildings as part of Midpoint Plaza, replacing both the areas along the canal south of 79th Street and north of 82nd Street.

Apartment buildings will infill the areas north and south of 82nd Street. If they front Biscayne Boulevard, there will be a retail wrap. Picture Midtown, only a bit shorter.

You've seen the Triton Tower (INS) plans. I see an eventual reconceptualization for the remainder of Midpoint Plaza, too. I don't see the single-story commercial structures being salvaged on the northeast corner of 79th Street and the Boulevard. I don't know of any commercial properties available from there to the bay. So the rest is waiting ... and fantasizing.

I see more restaurants, specialty food stores (more than just Marky's), and office buildings (doctors, dentists, veterinarians). Live, work, eat, and play. Maybe (hint, hint) John Kunkel of 50 Eggs group or Michelle Bernstein of Michy's fame could find a place on NE 79th Street for a new restaurant — I hear tell of a public storage facility that is unlikely to happen on a large parcel zoned for restaurant use.

I hope new development is held to current zoning, with adjustments where they're reasonable and sensible. Please, no 20-story buildings next to successful two-story businesses, forcing them into

obsolescence — but skillful placement next to irresponsible business owners might be welcome. I challenge developers to look at the community comprehensively, as opposed to how high, how much profit, and how to exit.

If done well, NE 79th Street (along with the rest of Shorecrest) will become the crown jewel of the Upper Eastside, instead of the oft-forgotten neighborhood north of the MiMo district. It can be a place people want to live and play. Now is the time for a business district association to form and work with area leaders to shape and polish that jewel. We are primed to become a Cinderella story.

Unfortunately, past zoning decisions suggest that the city will not always concern itself with the right decision. The jet ski rental allowed to take up shop in Ted Vernon's old place to tear up the backs of manatees was not of concern to the city's zoning department. Surprisingly, the shop is now vacant. Kudos to those of you reporting to police the rentals being operated above wake speed! Remember that you do have some power, and we didn't have to resort to picketing.

Bad decisions and lack of enforcement still plague the Little River Club and Tokyo

Valentino issues. Both are under settlement agreements that they appear to be violating. The city's responses are slow but ongoing. Persist, people, and contact your commissioner, city mayor, and city attorney to request that they take action. If you don't think the bayfront area really needs a large storage facility, let these folks know about it.

Transformation is sometimes slow, painful, and compromising. The scale of change is often larger than expected. Evolution is at times iterative. Moving forward may mean taking a step back before moving ahead again. With time, the brilliance at the other end is often amazing.

The MiMo district is having an amazing resurgence, and applause is in order for all of those responsible. Scaling safeguards, while beneficial in maintaining height restrictions, can create dilemmas when thinking about mixed-use projects. Given traffic, available space, ease of working with the area's civic organization, and some incredible plans in all phases of development, NE 79th Street is indeed the future, and the future is now.

Shorecrest is poised to become the Upper Eastside's superstar.

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Locals Get Their Due at This Year's Book Fair

A tented "swamp," popups, and more multimedia twists

By Anne Tschida
BT Arts Editor

The Miami Book Fair International has become the nation's largest literary fair, one of South Florida's biggest annual events, and a serious crowd pleaser. But sometimes the "Florida" in the fair gets a little lost. Not this year. Some new additions are all about the Sunshine State, from literature

Mendez. It's supposed to feel like a cross between the great and divey (now defunct) Jimbo's and the white-draped Delano. You can't get much more Miami than that.

Inside, starting on Sunday, November 16, will be an array of eclectic offerings; in fact, the Swamp appears to be as much a "happening" as anything else.

So on opening day, you might stop by the tent and board the "Weird Miami



EXILE Artists' Book Lounge, shown here at Locust Projects, is the brainchild of local artist Amanda Keeley.

to art to music.

Most of the celebration of local talent will be centered in the Swamp, at the southeast corner of NE 3rd Street and NE 2nd Avenue. There a tent is being transformed into a culture lounge, according to program director Lissette

Bus Tour: Muhammad Ali Edition," presented by Bas Fisher Invitational and Thought Loom. It leaves at 4:00 p.m. and "follows Cassius Clay's daily training run from Overtown to Miami Beach," and includes film, dance, and poetry, plus an interactive musical



The poster for this year's installment of the Miami Book Fair International.

experience. Space is limited, so RSVP early: www.basfisherinvitational.com.

Or stay at the tent for the opening party and DJ Lolo spinning records on the Porch from 4:00 p.m. on; or partake in the poetry karaoke party ("Come for the poetry, stay for the flubbed lines!") courtesy of the O, Miami poetry

collective. Maybe you'll want to sit still and watch the new documentary *Deep City: The Birth of Miami Sound*, about Miami music in the early 1960s.

On Monday, musician Oscar Fuentes, the man known at the Biscayne Poet, will write poetry on the spot, "live" on the Porch.



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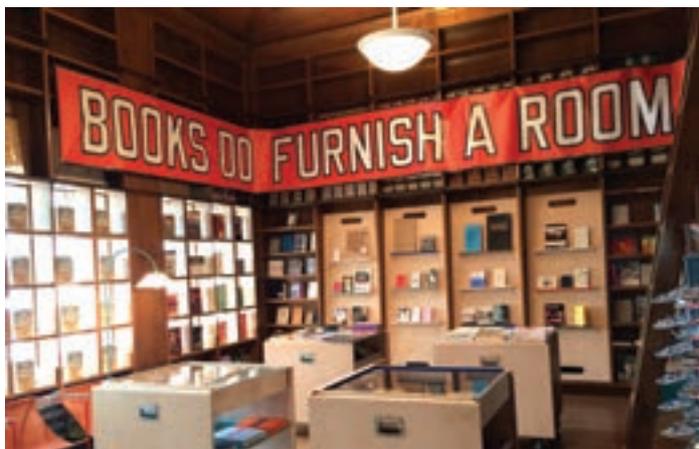
On Thursday, listen to the lyrical reading of her first book from Afro-Spanish singing star Buika (who now makes Miami home), accompanied by a *cajon* player. Sticking with the Ali theme, check out the screening that day of *Muhammad Ali: Made in Miami*, by Miamians Alan Tomlinson and *BT* contributor Gaspar González. There will also be dance performance by the Tattooed Ballerinas and a concert from the Spam Allstars.

Throughout the week, murals will be painted on the tent; there'll be talks about African-American and Afro-Cuban musical and literary history in Florida; bizarre tales of haunted houses and mermaids; and readings from the second edition of the local Sweat Broadside Project.

The Swamp, says Mendez — who arrived with the Mariel Boatlift and has witnessed the rise of the new Miami — is long overdue. “There has long been a literary culture in Florida, sometimes hidden,” she says. But recently “there has just been this explosion of the arts,” and it seemed only right for that energetic outburst to get its own venue and platform at the book fair.

Sunday will close with a mini-film festival from the Borscht indie-film crew; a drag queen and queer reading brunch; and music and food courtesy of the Rhythm Foundation and a condensed version of its Big Night in Little Haiti.

Another new feature this year: the EXILE Artists' Book Lounge, brain-child of local artist Amanda Keeley. She inaugurated the first “pop-up” artists bookstore at Locust Projects art gallery in September — a quirky and engrossing installation that was filled with publications made by artists.



Keeley's EXILE pop-up bookstore popped up at Books & Books recently, and next at the book fair.

“Artists' books are not traditional monographs or exhibition catalogues that simply display photos of an artist's work,” explains Keeley. “These books are conceived as works of art, in and of themselves. They are affordable and accessible, usually mass distributed and produced, intended to reach a broad audience.”

When she returned to Miami in 2013, Keeley says, she was surprised there were no alternative spaces highlighting such works. But instead of a traditional brick-and-mortar store, “I decided that EXILE should be experimental and adaptive. By having a traveling pop-up-shop business model, it allows the store to reach different communities and to evolve with each location.”

After Locust, her store migrated to Books & Books in Coral Gables, not coincidentally run by one of the book fair's founders, Mitchell Kaplan. Now, it will pop up at the fair, where, she hopes, “it will be a relaxed atmosphere where people can come and browse, relax, mingle, and enjoy some of the events we have scheduled — readings, performances, live printing. It will be a lot of fun to

gather a community together and share in our passion for print culture.”

The works in the lounge will not be all local, and not all books. The book fair describes the EXILE offerings as performances, lectures, and workshops revealing the “radical history and legacy of artists' publications.” Yoko Ono will provide the wish trees (on which visitors tie their written wishes); Isis Miller will jump-start the Flash Poetry Mob; and naturally, Dada and Fluxus will be discussed.

Performance artist Domingo Castillo will do some “live” printing, and the Peter London Global Dance Company will interpret the concept through movement. “EXILE is collaborative in nature,” says Keeley. “We provide artists a platform to present related projects that connect to the selected theme.”

Clearly, as the cliché goes, this isn't your grandmother's book fair. Both Mendez and Keeley have a vision that falls within the current trend that's not just local, but national and international. For many in the arts community, standing alone has gotten to be a lonely position — trying to involve as many



Coming to the fair: singing star Buika (now a Miami resident), who'll be reading from her new book.

disciplines as possible at happenings and events is the future. It cultivates broader awareness; someone only familiar with dance will encounter poetry; electronic music will be an aural addition to browsing the latest novels; contemporary art will complement an author reading.

So it's no wonder that public radio station WLRN is involved in these new fair ventures, as is the Jewish Museum of Florida, the Rhythm Foundation, HistoryMiami, and the various independent dance, music, and arts groups. And the Knight Foundation has funded most of it.

There truly will be something for everyone at the fresh tents and lounges of the 2014 Miami Book Fair International.

The fair runs November 16 through November 23 at the downtown Miami-Dade College Wolfson campus. The Swamp will be at the corner of NE 3rd Street and NE 2nd Avenue; the EXILE Artists' Book Lounge will be in Room 2103, Building 2. Check out the complete listings at www.miamibookfair.com. You can download the entire pdf or the app.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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Culture: GALLERIES + MUSEUMS

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ALBERTO LINERO GALLERY

2294 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
786-286-7355
www.albertolinerogallery.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

ALEJANDRA VON HARTZ FINE ARTS

2630 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
305-438-0220
www.alejandravonhartz.net
Through November 14:
"Patience is a Mine Field" by Amadeo Azar
November 20 through January 3:
"Ornament and Barricade" by Jaime Gili
"Displacement" by Ricardo Alcaide

AREVALO GALLERY

151 NE 40th St., Ste 200, Miami
305-860-3311
www.arevalogallery.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

ART NOUVEAU GALLERY

348 NW 29th St., Miami
305-573-4661
www.artnouveau.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

BAKEHOUSE ART COMPLEX

561 NW 32nd St., Miami
305-576-2828
www.bacfl.org
Through November 3:
"El jardin de los muertos contentitos" with Jim Hammond, Chuck Loose, Janet Luru Rudawsky, Ian Rowan, Adriana Sandoval, Ronni Gerstel, Sonia Neira Matthews, Omar Angulo, and Jorge de Rojas
November 7 through November 14:
"Lucky You! 7" with various artists
Reception November 7, 7 to 10 p.m.

BAS FISHER INVITATIONAL

122 NE 11th St., Miami
DWNNTWN ArtHouse
www.basfisherinvitational.com
Through November 6:
"Shifting Nature: Web Bodies" by Juan Carlos Zaldivar

BRIDGE RED STUDIOS / PROJECT SPACE

12425 NE 13th Ave. #5, North Miami
305-978-4856
www.bridgeredstudios.com
November 16 through January 4:
"Ghosts" by Duane Hanson
"SAIC/SF" with various artists
Reception November 16, 6 to 9 p.m.

BUTTER GALLERY

2930 NW 7th Ave., Miami

305-303-6254
www.buttergallery.com
November 6 through January 8:
"Departure" by Yuri Tuma
Reception November 6, 7 p.m.

CAROL JAZZAR CONTEMPORARY ART

158 NW 91st St., Miami Shores
305-490-6906
www.cjazzart.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

DAVID CASTILLO GALLERY

420 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach
305-573-8110
www.davidcastillogallery.com
Through November 15:
"Amerika" with various artists

DIANA LOWENSTEIN FINE ARTS

2043 N. Miami Ave., Miami
305-576-1804
www.dlfinearts.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

100 NE 11th St., Miami
DWNNTWN ArtHouse
305-607-5527
www.dimensionsvariable.net
November 7 through December 22:
Fabian Peña
Reception November 7, 7 to 10 p.m.

DINA MITRANI GALLERY

2620 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
786-486-7248
www.dinamitrani.com
November 6 through January 10:
"Genesis" by Sebastiao Salgado

DOT FIFTYONE GALLERY

187 NW 27th St., Miami
305-573-9994
www.dotfiftyone.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

EMERSON DORSCH

151 NW 24th St., Miami
305-576-1278
www.emersondorsch.com
Through November 15:
"thisishappening" with various artists

ETRA FINE ART

2315 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
305-438-4383
www.etrFINEART.com
November 6 through November 30:
"Fall Group Show" with various artists
Reception November 6, 6 to 10 p.m.

FREDRIC SNITZER GALLERY

1540 NE Miami Ct., Miami



Fernando Mastrangelo *Medallion*, Crystal sugar, sugar, and dragées, 2013, at Bass Museum.

305-448-8976
www.snitzer.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

GALLERY DIET

174 NW 23rd St., Miami
305-571-2288
www.gallerydiet.com
Through November 22:
"Byways" by Christy Gast
November 28 through December 31:
"I'm With Her" by Michelle Feinstein

GUCCIVUITTON

8375 NE 2nd Ave., Miami
office@guccivuitton.net
www.guccivuitton.net
Contact gallery for exhibition information

JUAN RUIZ GALLERY

301 NW 28th St., Miami
786-310-7490
www.juanruizgallery.com
Through November 22:
"Painting on Canvas" by Glexis Novoa

KABE CONTEMPORARY

223 NW 26th St., Miami
305-573-8142
www.kabecontemporary.com
Through November 15:
"New Geometry" with Edgar Orlaineta, Robert Ferrer i Martorell, Gabriel Acevedo Velarde, and Victor Lucena

KAVACHNINA CONTEMPORARY

46 NW 36th St., Miami
305-209-0278
www.kavachnina.com
Through November 30:
"Art Broken" with various artists
Reception November 29, 7 to 10 p.m.

KELLEY ROY GALLERY

151 NW 24th St., Miami
305-447-3888
www.kelleyroygallery.com
Through November 6:
"From Dawn to Dusk: A Pairing of Two Visionary Artists" with Heriberto Mora, and Timothy Sanchez

LELIA MORDOCH GALLERY

2300 N Miami Ave., Miami
786-431-1506
www.galerieleliamordoch.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

LOCUST PROJECTS

3852 N. Miami Ave., Miami
305-576-8570
www.locustprojects.org
November 15 through January 1:
"Welcome to the Future" by Daniel Arsham
"Sub-Tropical Social Sculptures" by Simon Vega

MICHAEL JON GALLERY

255 NE 69th St., Miami
305-521-8520
www.michaeljongallery.com
November 22 through January 17:
"Monday and Friday, Tuesday and Friday, Wednesday and Friday, Thursday and Friday, Friday and Friday" by Egan Frantz
Reception November 22, 6 to 9 p.m.

MINDY SOLOMON GALLERY

172 NW 24th St., Miami
786-953-6917
www.mindsolomon.com
Through November 8:
"Folkloric Acid" by Einar and James de la Torre
November 14 through December 26:
"Morphosis" by James Kennedy
Reception November 14, 6 to 9 p.m.

N'NAMDI CONTEMPORARY GALLERY

177 NW 23rd St., Miami
786-332-4736
www.nnamdicontemporary.com
Call gallery for exhibition information

NINA TORRES FINE ART

1800 N Bayshore Dr. CP1, Miami
305-395-3599
www.ninatortresfineart.com
November 1 through November 15:
"Solo Show" by Manuela Cimmino
Reception November 7, 7 to 10 p.m.



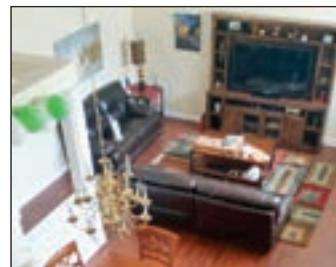
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PAN AMERICAN ART PROJECTS

2450 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
305-573-2400
www.panamericanart.com
Through November 5:

"Permutations: Contemporary Cuban Art" with Abel Barroso, J. Roberto Diago, Jorge Lopez Pardo, and Meira Marrero and José Toirac

ROBERT FONTAINE GALLERY

2349 NW 2nd Ave., Miami
305-397-8530
www.robertfontainegallery.com
November 8 through 26:

"SYNTHETIC DAYDREAMS" by Nick Gentry
Reception November 8, 5 to 9 p.m.

SPINELLO PROJECTS

2930 NW 7th Ave., Miami
786-271-4223
www.spinelloprojects.com
Through November 15:

"Let It Slide" by Johnny Robles

SWAMPSPACE

3940 N. Miami Ave., Miami
www.swampspace.blogspot.com
Through November 17:

"SWAMPTOBERFEST: People's Choice Award, Knight Foundation" with various artists

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI GALLERY

2750 NW 3rd Ave., Ste 4, Miami
305-284-3161

www.as.miami.edu/art
November 4 through 28:

"Naiad" with Jacqueline Gopie and Kathleen Staples
Reception November 8, 4 to 10 p.m.

WYNWOOD WALLS

NW 2nd Avenue between 25th and 26th streets
305-573-0658

www.thewynwoodwalls.com

Ongoing:

"Wynwood Walls" with various artists

YEELAN GALLERY

294 NW 54th St., Miami
954-235-4758, www.yeelanart.com
November 22 through January 10:

"Love, Strength, and Soul" by Tim Okamura
Reception November 22, 7:30 p.m.

ZADOK GALLERY

2534 N. Miami Ave., Miami
305-438-3737

www.zadokgallery.com
Through December 20:

"Almost Empty" by Kumi Yamashita

MUSEUM & COLLECTION EXHIBITS

ARTCENTER/SOUTH FLORIDA

800 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach
305-674-8278

www.artcentersf.org

Call for exhibition information

Melissa's Pick

In tribute to musician Frank Zappa, Geoffrey Farmer has created a theatrical spectacle, rich in absurdity and mysterious multi-sensory interventions. The sculptures on display, fashioned from both crafted and found objects, populate the "stage" and act as antennas of light and sound. A stick without roots or leaves mechanically reaches for the synthetic sun, a giant looms over the scenery like a radio tower — his muscular arms holding a lightbulb. Surreal and awkward creatures are carefully placed, broadcasting the ambient sounds of radio transmissions, the wind whipping, the snap of a camera, voices in the next room, or the bustle of cars below an open window. The Dadaist spirit is alive and at play, as each experience with the work becomes a chance encounter meriting multiple visits to this incredible installation. The light in the room shifts and a monologue is cued: "The play begins. You can leave at anytime. The doors are curtains...If we didn't know how to dramatize, we wouldn't know how to laugh. Without laughter you wouldn't be able to provide authority. Without authority we wouldn't have doors. Without doors we wouldn't have curtains. Without curtains, we wouldn't have darkness. Without darkness we wouldn't have sleep. Now...the play begins..." — *Melissa Wallen*



Geoffrey Farmer *Let's Make the Water Turn Black*, mixed-media installation, 2013-14, at Pérez Art Museum Miami.

ARTCENTER/SOUTH FLORIDA PROJECT 924

924 Lincoln Rd., Miami Beach
305-674-8278

www.artcentersf.org

November 19 through February 1:

"Thirty Years on the Road" curated by Edouard Duval - Carrie

Reception November 19, 7 to 10 p.m.

BASS MUSEUM OF ART

2100 Collins Ave., Miami Beach
305-673-7530

www.bassmuseum.org

Through January 11:

"GOLD" with various artists

CIFO (Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation)

1018 N. Miami Ave., Miami

305-455-3380

www.cifo.org

Call gallery for exhibition information

DE LA CRUZ COLLECTION CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE

23 NE 41st St., Miami

305-576-6112

www.delacruzcollection.org

Ongoing:

"Looking at Process: Works from the Collection of Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz" with various artists

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FROST ART MUSEUM

10975 SW 17th St., Miami

305-348-2890

thefrost.fiu.edu

November 8 through December 7:

"Horizonte infinito" by Gaby Grobo

November 8 through January 4:

"A Global Exchange: Geometric Abstraction Since 1950" with various artists

November 8 through January 18:

"ADinfinitem" by Wang Qingsong

Through January 11:

"Remembering Tokyo" by Koizumi Kishio

LITTLE HAITI CULTURAL/COMPLEX CENTER ART GALLERY

212-260 NE 59th Terrace., Miami
305-960-2969

www.littlehaiticulturalcenter.com

Through November 21:

"Artist Series V: Manifest Destiny" with various artists, curated by Marie Vickles

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART + DESIGN

Freedom Tower

600 Biscayne Blvd., Miami

305-237-7700

www.mdcmoad.org

November 8 through February 8:

"Zine-o-mania: A World of Fanzines from the University of Miami Special Collections" with various artists

Through November 9:

"2014-15 CINTAS Fellowship Finalist Exhibition" with various artists

Through November 9:

"The Universe Within 6pne swing/SPACE/Miami" by Asser Saint-Val

Through November 14:

"Work/Work: New Works by MDC/NWSA Faculty" with various artists

PÉREZ ART MUSEUM MIAMI

1103 Biscayne Blvd., Miami

305-375-3000

www.pamm.org

Through January 11:

"Jardim Botanico" by Beatriz Milhazes
Through January 25:

"Formulating a Plot" by Adler Guerrier
Through March 1:

"Beyond the Limited Life of Painting: Prints and Multiples from the Holding Capital Group Collection"
Through March 1:

"Let's Make the Water Turn Black" by Geoffrey Farmer
Through April 5:

"Project Gallery" by Nicole Cherubini

THE MARGULIES COLLECTION

591 NW 27th St., Miami

305-576-1051

www.margulieswarehouse.com

Through April 25:

"Fifteen Year Anniversary Exhibition" with various artists

THE RUBELL FAMILY COLLECTION

95 NW 29th St., Miami

305-573-6090

http://rfc.museum

Call collection for exhibition information

THE WOLFSONIAN-FIU

1001 Washington Ave., Miami Beach

305-535-2622

www.wolfsonian.org

November 11 through April 5:

"Myth and Machine: The First World War in Visual Culture" with various artists

Through November 10:

"BUMMER" with various artists, curated by Todd Oldham

Compiled by Melissa Wallen

Send listings, jpeg images, and events information to art@biscaynetimes.com



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This American Life Brings Dance to Radio

Ira Glass, the host of NPR's popular radio show *This American Life*, partners with Monica Bill Barnes & Company Productions in a "lively, funny, and heartfelt" show he debuted at Carnegie Hall in 2013 and which has brought down the house everywhere he's presented it. In **Three Acts, Two Dancers, One Radio Host**, he tells stories and shares audio clips that are presented in dance — and calls it one of his favorite projects ever. Presented by MDC Live Arts on **Sunday, November 16** at 5:00 p.m. at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts (174 E. Flagler St., Miami); tickets \$30; mdclivearts.org.

Theater, 15 Minutes at a Time

The unique **Microtheater Miami** series has returned to the Spanish Cultural Center (1490 Biscayne Blvd., Miami), and features seven original plays, each 15 minutes long, with performances in English and Spanish. Since each play will be performed multiple times a night, from **Thursday, November 6, through Sunday, November 30**, you can package your own theater schedule at five dollars for a single performance, or plan to take in all of them, in the center's outdoor courtyard setting. The plays take place in "micro theaters," each seating only 15 people. A wine bar is available. Programming on Wednesdays and Thursdays is in English, Fridays and Saturdays in Spanish, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.; www.ccemiami.org.

Free Youth Concert and Petting Zoo (of Sorts)

The **Free Family Fest** at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (1300 Biscayne Blvd., Miami) features the Miami Music Project Youth Orchestra in a program titled *Rise of the Titans*. The concert, "an epic tale about the genius of some of the most beloved composers of our time," includes music from Shostakovich and Mussorgsky, among others. It begins at 1:30 p.m. and

is preceded at noon by a "petting zoo" of musical instruments, taking place in the Peacock Education Center, located inside the concert hall. A word to the wise: arrive early; www.arshtcenter.org.

Let's Pedal Through Historic Little Havana

Little Havana changes constantly, and it's always worth a visit — especially one led by local historian Paul George. History-Miami's **Little Havana Bike Tour** is scheduled for **Sunday, November 9**, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. You'll pedal past an ancient Tequesta settlement, some of Greater Miami's oldest homes, and Cuban cigar stores, and mingle with the players in Domino Park. You'll even visit the site of an old Ku Klux Klan building — there's more history here than you may know. The ride leaves from Los Pinareños Fruteria, 1334 SW 8th St., Miami; tickets \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members; info for bike rentals is also available at www.historymiami.org.

Jazz Fest at Sunny Isles

The **Sunny Isles Beach Jazz Fest** turns seven this year and runs from **Friday, November 14, through Sunday, November 16**. There are special concerts that bookend the jazz fest, involving prix fixe dinner at the Aquilina and prix fixe brunch at Trump International — but the main

event runs Saturday from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at Heritage Park (19200 Collins Ave., Sunny Isles): a concert themed "What a Wonderful World" and featuring the Melton Mustafa Orchestra with guest vocalists Rochelle Lightfoot, Brenda Alford, LeNard Rutledge, and international jazz percussionist Leon Foster Thomas. Tickets are \$15 for this event (but vary for other dining and concert shows); www.sunny-islesbeachmiami.com/jazzfest/.

The Fun Is On the River Walk

You can spend the entire day at this year's **Miami River Walk Festival**, on **Saturday, November 15**. The seventh annual festival runs from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with lots of food (and emphasis on Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine), tons of live music (Regla Cumbá; de Oro de Colombia; guitarist/bagpiper Armando Rodriguez; the Bolivia Mágica ballet folklórico; Paraguayan harp player Alberto Sanabria; and Conjunto Anturas). Kids' activities include face painting, clowns, and balloons — and don't forget the crafts and a boat parade for all ages. There's discounted parking (five dollars) from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at One Bayfront Plaza; enter through the first garage on the right from SE 2nd Street. Or forget the car altogether, take the Metromover to Park Station and just walk a block to the river — it's all free; miamiriverwalkfestival.com.

Jazz Prodigy Opens Winter Music Season

Emmet Cohen holds music degrees from University of Miami and the Manhattan School of Music, awards as *Downbeat's* "Best Jazz Soloist" and "Best Jazz Trio," and was a recent finalist in the Thelonious Monk International Piano Competition — and he's only 24. His trio will kick off the **St. Martha-Yamaha Concert Series** (9301 Biscayne Blvd., Miami Shores) on **Sunday, November 16**, at 3:00 p.m. The series continues through the winter with a mixture of classical, Latin, and opera programming. Tickets range from \$10 to \$20; saintmarthaconcerts.com.

One Night Only: Paquito D'Rivera

Ever since saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera left Cuba and landed in the United States in the early 1980s, he has become a Latin jazz phenomenon, winning 12 Grammys and numerous other awards, and releasing numerous highly acclaimed albums. He will play for one night only at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium (2901 W. Flagler St., Miami) at 8:00 p.m. on **Saturday, November 15**; tickets cost \$33; www.boxofficeticket.com/paquito-drivera-tickets.aspx.



A Cartoon Feature for Kids

The basic premise is this: Jewish mouse Fievel Mousekewitz flees czarist Russia with his family to escape Cossack cat persecution, falls overboard during the transatlantic crossing, must find his way to America and his family, then join with other immigrant mice and rats against the nasty cats in Lower Manhattan. The animated children's film was released 1986 and will be the feature for the second **Miami Theater Center and O Cinema Family Film Day**, which screens at 11:00 a.m. on **Saturday, November 22** at MTC (9806 NE 2nd Ave., Miami Shores); tickets \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids; www.o-cinema.org/venue/o-cinema-miami-shores/.

A French Classic Plays the Classics

The 25-year-old French pianist David Kadouch won the Beethoven Bonn Competition in 2005 and Leeds International Piano Competition in 2009. He has performed with Pierre Boulez, headlined the Montreux festival, and played with numerous international orchestras and festivals. He'll now inaugurate the **Miami International Piano Festival** on **Sunday, November 23**, at 5:00 p.m., with piano solos of Bach, Schumann, and Brahms, part of four "Sundays at Five" at the Aventura Arts & Culture Center (3385 NE 188th St., Aventura); call for tickets information, 305-466-8002; miamipianofest.com.

Compiled by BT arts editor Anne Tschida. Please send information and images to calendar@biscaynetimes.com.

\$100 Million for What Reefs?

Who does Rick Scott think he's kidding?

By Jim W. Harper
BT Contributor

Welcome to a bucolic episode of Jimmy Stewart's "Good Green Things." Let's begin with helpful hints:

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... Beep! We interrupt this show to bring you news of a breaking environment in Florida.

Stop the presses! Holy fan-tastic debate, bat-fan. Yes, remember the gubernatorial debate at Broward College that launched 1000 fan parodies?

Gov. Rick Scott is a lying liar who lies while lying, or standing. During the actual debate, after "fangate" blew over and crowds stopped chanting "it's too hot for Scott," the governor defended his environmental record and criticized that of Gov. Charlie Crist. It would be hilarious if it weren't so sad.

As a rebuttal, I offer the headline of a September editorial from the *Tampa Bay Tribune*: "The Rick Scott record: an environmental disaster."

Scott has the worst environmental record of any Florida governor in the past 50 years, according to the article. As a reference point, 50 years ago in the 1960s was before the first Earth Day, before the creation of the EPA and other seminal

national legislation, and before people gave a hoot to not pollute.

In other words, Scott's reign of disaster takes us back to the pro-polluter days of a world that needed the anti-litter commercial of the "crying Indian."

This is the governor whose boldest environmental idea during the past four years was to transform state parks into golf courses, complete with private country clubs and liquor licenses. Who needs big green government-maintained spaces? Golf courses attract paying adults, whereas forests and fields harbor wildlife and the impoverished child in all of us.

Seriously, how can you trust someone who wanted to take our state parks — a golden asset of the people and the envy of other states — and turn them into another mint for out-of-state Donald Trumps? Our parks, Mr. Governor, are not for sale.

You cannot believe a word Scott says about the environment, and it is difficult to overstate how much he controls the conversation in Florida. Journalists get little information. To obtain answers to questions about financial statements by the governor for this article, I was instructed by John Tupps from the governor's press office to search a website, and he referred me onward to campaign managers Greg Blair and Jackie Schutz, who were even less responsive.

The governor employs a lot of smoke and mirrors. And worse.

Employees of the state are under a gag order and cannot say the phrase "climate change." (Seriously, I did not invent this.

Look at official state documents after 2010,



and you will find that the term has been in hibernation.) Scott would not discuss it during the debate and insisted on using the more limited term "global warming." And even that minute concession was embedded in lies.

Should we call him Richard "Nixon" Scott? Or Governor Voldemort?

The lie during the fangate debate that made me fall off my chair was when Scott dropped the tidbit that the State of Florida has spent \$100 million to protect coral reefs. Are you kidding me? The state barely spends \$1 million annually for the entire Florida Coral Conservation Program of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Even if we throw in the approximately \$5 million annual budget of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (which is funded jointly by state and federal sources), it would take nearly two decades for the state to get close to spending \$100 million to protect coral reefs.

If Scott means spending \$100 million to destroy and degrade Florida's coral reefs, that statement is much more defensible. The state has supported the \$200 million-plus Deep Dredge project at PortMiami, with probably half the money causing environmental damage.

In the dredging project's latest development, the FDEP accuses the Army Corps

of Engineers of excessive impacts on corals and reefs. Yes, even FDEP no longer bite its tongue. In early October, a coalition of environmentalists filed a related lawsuit regarding the Endangered Species Act.

Perhaps the governor was including the \$50 million project to build 2012's Center of Excellence for Coral Reef Ecosystem Research at Nova Southeastern University? Fifteen million dollars came from a federal stimulus grant, and the private university claims to have funded the remainder. So why would the governor get that credit?

I'll ask the question again that no one from Scott's camp has answered: Where is the evidence that his administration has spent \$100 million to protect Florida's coral reefs?

That figure, by the way, is five times higher than the total annual budget of the nationwide Coral Reef Conservation Program (which Congress has failed to reauthorize since 2004, but that's another story).

Sorry for the interruption. Now back to your regularly scheduled drivell.

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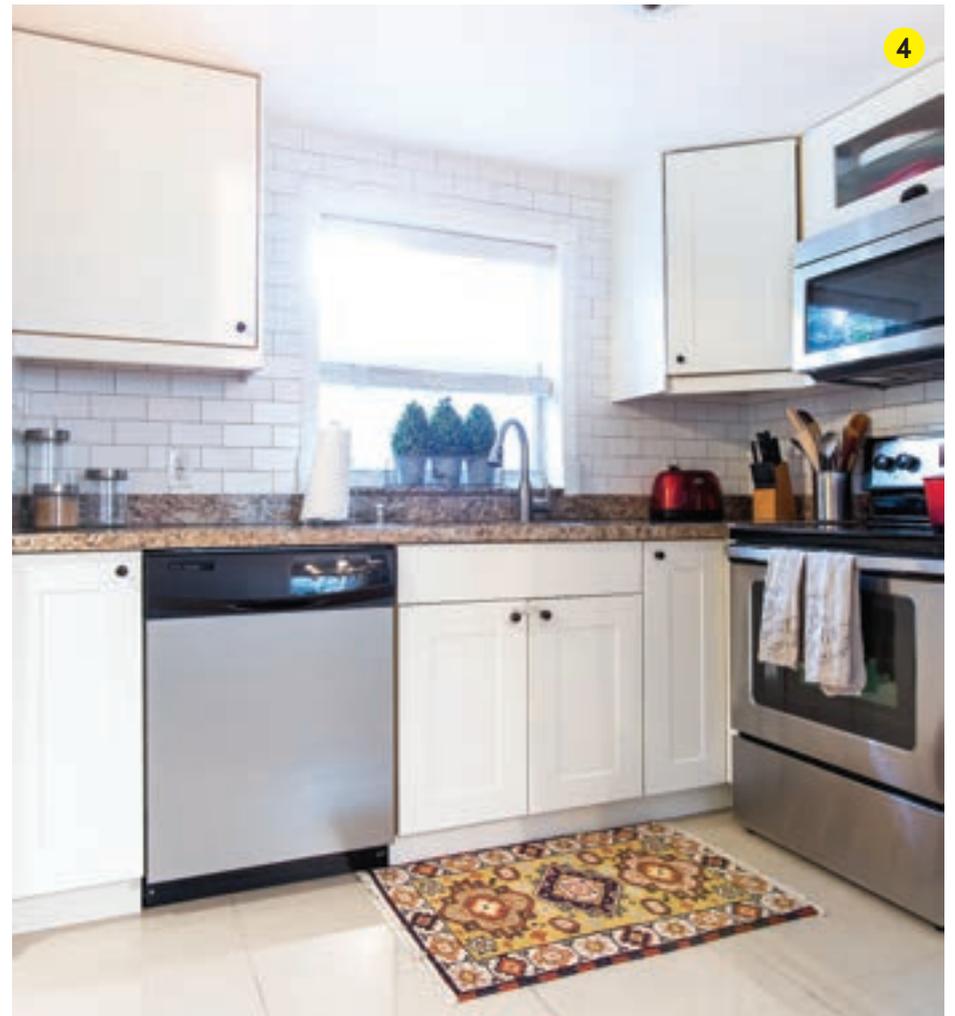
By **Sondra Schneider**
BT Contributor

When Meghan and David Grimbert decided to leave their life in Paris and move to the States, there was only one place they wished to live.

Meghan had grown up in Miami Shores, and her family still resided there, so she knew it was a great place to raise kids. Compared to the blingy cha-cha of the Beach and downtown, Miami Shores

is a bubble of suburban living. A family-oriented neighborhood of well-maintained homes and manicured lawns with its own village center and country club, Miami Shores resembles a small town set down in the midst of a bustling city.

Meghan and David first met in Italy, where she worked toward her master's degree in fashion. After a stint in New York working for Zac Posen (he's the witty judge on *Project Runway*), she moved to Paris to be with David. His



family owned a venerable men's tailoring establishment catering to the Paris elite. While Meghan worked in the Parisian couture world, David worked at his family firm and pursued his real career as a graffiti artist.

They had a plan for the future. They would move to Miami and buy a small

apartment building as a source of income and a house that might need work but had good potential. With Meghan's fashion-trained eye and David's artist's sensibility, plus some sage business advice, they found both properties.

The 16-unit apartment building is where David spends most of his time



learning and practicing the fine arts of carpentry, plumbing, and plastering. He is also busy as part of a crew painting the graffiti walls of Wynwood and has set up his studio in the free-standing garage of their house.

Meanwhile, Meghan is at home with Harper, their two-year-old daughter, and Archer, a pretty kitten that, as you might suspect, matches the décor. Since rehabbing the apartment property is a top priority, the house has been a very slow work in progress.

When the Grimberts bought it a year ago, the two-story 1938 house had been abandoned and rotting for five years before an investment company salvaged the wreckage and made it habitable. Still, it needs work.

The front door opens directly into a surprisingly open space, given that the rooms are actually quite small. A fire-placed area to the right (for some reason almost every house built in South Florida in the 1930s seems to have a fireplace in case of a sudden freeze) serves as a living room, with a dining area and kitchen to the left.

One step down from the dining area, a tiny room is being used as the family room/den. The only real furniture in the living room at the moment is a classic camelback sofa handed down in the family (it's due for a reupholstery job) and a glass-and-metal coffee table from a local antique shop. An anniversary gift of a beautiful patterned rug in shades of cream and pale Parisian Blue will set the future color scheme.

According to Meghan, the place where everything happens is the dining area. A fully extended French-style table surrounded by six Restoration Hardware



chairs is the center of family activity. The table was another of Meghan's finds. Left by its owner at a refinisher's shop, she bought the table for next to nothing and had it stripped and lightly waxed.

When they're not hanging out at the table, they are in the den watching television or playing with Harper. A white slipcovered sofa extends along the entire width of one wall, accompanied by a couple of bentwood chairs and an IKEA table. A pair of charming paintings of Provence landscapes that Meghan dug up in a thrift store add splashes of color to the pale room. In the future, they intend to build a patio on that side of the house and open the end wall with glass doors.

As for the small kitchen, it still has the bottom-of-the-line stainless appliances and granite countertops installed by the rehabber, but the look has been lightened and



upgraded by replacing the backsplash and framing the window with white subway tiles. In time, the granite will go in favor of a more pleasing material.

The master bedroom and bath are also downstairs, but at this point in time, since Harper is so little, it is being used as a guest bedroom for frequent French family visits. The actual master bedroom is upstairs next to Harper's room.

All of the bedrooms are done in pale shades of taupe, cream, and soft white, an effect that is both elegant and serene. Even Harper's room makes no nod to girly-girly, which befits a toddler who speaks both French and English.

The furnishings are a simple mix of modern and antique. King-size beds dressed in pale linens are flanked by antique end tables and lamps. A modern iron canopy bed in the master bedroom blends with an antique dresser and night tables found in one of the shops on 125th Street, as was the silver vase lamp. The wood floor was left very dark, although the dark wood moldings in the rest of the house were painted white.

Recently, more progress has been made. Draperies and some additional furnishings have been added to the mix. It is this slow and thoughtful building piece by piece that makes Meghan and David's home so special. Everything in it has a story and a history, and that is surely more satisfying than just rushing out to buy a room-to-go or hiring a professional decorator to impose his or her taste on your private spaces.

As David says, "Things don't need to be expensive, they just need style." It's

worth thinking about if you're planning to refurnish. Maybe the look and quality of an older, well-made piece of furniture trumps a cheap new one. To be sure, it will be fun to shop for, as well as a lot more interesting to live with.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

Photography by Silvia Ros

1. Careful editing makes the living room feel larger than the actual space. Note the old washtub used as a planter.
2. The dining room table is the center of family life.
3. Harper in the TV room. Provence paintings found in a thrift shop and an IKEA table.
4. How to update a so-so kitchen: Use a lot of white.
5. In the master bedroom, dark floors and furniture contrast with pale walls and linens.
6. David in his garage studio.
7. Harper's room has its own play table. Nubby carpet adds texture to the pale room.

We welcome your suggestions for future columns. Send photos and information to: sondra.schneider@biscaynetimes.com.

Biscayne Crime Beat

Compiled by Derek McCann

Slow Down, Be Mindful

6900 Block of NE 5th Avenue

When you live in the bottom apartment, you're at least assured of no steps when you carry your Publix bags home. But lock it up when you leave that hovel of easy tranquility. In this scenario, the victim's boyfriend came home in a rush, hours after a break-in, and didn't notice the missing computer and compromised desk for some time. The victim and her boyfriend later checked entry points and all doors/windows were secure as expected, except the front door. In an effort to be safe, the obvious was forgotten, and that door was not locked. Criminals will always try the front door first!

Unadvertised Yard Sale

5000 Block of N. Bayshore Drive

You could lock your door, unlike the aforementioned boyfriend, and surround it all with a steel fence — and it still won't matter. Don't leave goodies in your yard. Criminals actually did cut through a steel bar fence and then stole expensive yard equipment. The act was set in motion by the handy wheelbarrow left on the property, which the perpetrators used to load their loot into a waiting vehicle. Amazingly there are no witnesses to the cutting of the steel fence or the wheelbarrow loading of those pricey items. Looks like visible lawnmowers, and not Air Jordans, bring out the brazen best of our criminal community.

It's the Thought that Counts

700 Block of NE 70th Street

Burglars will look for any easy entry point if they can. This home had a flimsy side door to a garage that called this intruder's name. Once he had access, he made his way into the home, rummaged through the victims' belongings, and ransacked the place for good measure. He also brought some complementary crack cocaine and a crack pipe, which he left on the kitchen table. Perhaps it was his idea of a nice parting gift, thug style? We doubt the homeowners have cracked a smile since.

Respect Your Elders?

500 Block of NE 83rd Street

When a twentysomething young man sees an older gentleman in his 50s, he should remember his manners and be



respectful. The older man in this report even addressed him by saying "hi." It did occur outside, on this renter's private property, which is a tad strange, but the distinguished gentleman made his way off; likely he thought it was a

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restaurant or watering hole? By the time he left, an apartment on the property stood burglarized. Landlord was notified immediately. So we gather we need to revise our ethics on this one; respect those off your property, but they're fair game for rudeness if they cross our property lines.

Start of a Beautiful (Dysfunctional) Friendship

7800 Block of N. Miami Avenue

Dating someone new lately? It may be okay to call it off if you get these warning signs. Victim No. 3 in this report is also Victim No. 2's boyfriend. It had been only one week, so boyfriend status was assigned pretty fast. His ex-boyfriend didn't appreciate this, and came by the home, kicked in the front door, and attacked the three people inside. But upon being thrown out by three people, he had the dexterity to grab two cell phones, and smash them on the ground. Maybe when the new boyfriend gets his cell phone replaced, he can start off fresh without his new flame's number. Then again, there is something to be said for passion.

Incomplete Security Expenses

700 Block of NE 82nd Terrace

If you're going to pay to have security cameras installed, get it done right. A home was burglarized and the owner was notified by his neighbor during the act. We gather the alarm system was not set up — but alarms can never replace nosy neighbors. The cameras had been moved from their original position because they were inexplicably not secured, so there was no video of the scumbags. They did not take the cameras, though, which would have secured some extra crack money — but this was not a sophisticated operation. They used a shopping cart as a mode of escape. The nosy neighbor was not willing to chase them at that point.

Slow it Down More

401 Biscayne Blvd.

With so much on our minds lately — Ebola, Putin drama, the crappy economy, ISIS, and just general Miami drama — it's easy to forget where we are and we can just blank out. If this happens to you, just make sure it's not at the Hard Rock Café. If you carry a purse, do not leave it unattended anywhere because most respectable criminals do not care about

the plight of the world. They are happy you care, though. This woman went to the bathroom, and returned to see an empty table without her purse. Admittedly, this does fall into a questionable category: a woman eating alone leaves her purse behind? It did get her a free meal at least.

Only in Miami

6800 Block of Biscayne Boulevard

Keeping up appearances, and one's lifestyle beyond the ability to afford it, has become our civic duty. This woman wanted a Brazilian body wax, but after the deed was done, she looked for that credit card. Not being able to find it, she had to call her boyfriend, and of course, she had to do it outside in her shiny BMW. She also had to leave, with her smooth privates now intact, stiffing the good people who dealt with her of \$65. Car did belong to a male in Pembroke Pines, but attempts to locate him proved unsuccessful at the address given for the license plate.

Value in the Eye of the Beholder

4400 Block of NE 2nd Avenue

Pretty much anything that is not secured can and will be stolen. So if you

want to leave several pallets of bricks on your front yard and walk away, be prepared to not see it the next morning. The homeowner suffered the effects of this strange phenomenon that occurs in those among us who take what isn't theirs. So if the wife is getting on your nerves, please make sure she is secured on the property anyway, or someone is going to take her — though that might help some.

Review Your Guest List, Always

200 Block of Biscayne Boulevard Way

In an effort to help his friends, a man invited several of them over for a get-together at this hotel. He later admitted to police he was a little bit drunk, and when he saw a stranger walking out of his rented party fortress with his wallet and cell phone, he couldn't provide much of a chase. Neither could his friends for that matter. Sadly, his get-together provided a getaway for the opportunistic crowd. Best to have a get-together with oneself, and lock the door, of course.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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Lift the spirit and inspire the imagination

A Park Just for Kids

A waterfront park in Surfside offers joyous chaos amid security

By **Jim W. Harper**
BT Contributor

This little park has legs. Lots and lots of little legs scurry around inside its fence, and they're mirrored outside by many other busy legs.

Walking the neighborhood is a dying art in South Florida, yet the beach towns here cling to this quaint tradition. And walkers continually stroll one bridge in particular that connects the three wealthy municipalities of Surfside, Bal Harbour, and Bay Harbor Islands. Curving over a turquoise canal, the southern walkway of the bridge provides the best views of the singular grassy park serving the town of Surfside.

Some bridge walkers are Orthodox Jews, especially on weekends, and there are plenty of secular walkers too — especially young ones. Little walkers in maroon polo shirts pour over the bridge every weekday afternoon and filter into Surfside's 96th Street Park. The monograms stitched in white on their shirts identify their mother ship, the Ruth K. Broad Bay Harbor elementary and middle school.

From the bridge, you spy another swarm of tykes in shiny royal blue uniforms. These are the wannabe soccer stars of the future, running laps around a grassy field as their coaches stand guard. Sticking to the park's edge, the mini soccer players jog past the odd mixture

of a fence, a high stucco wall, and a salty canal. A tall black chain-link fence along the canal prevents the escape of stray balls and wily children.

Don't go inside this park unless you are ten years old. You have been warned.

Adults are outnumbered 200 to 1, and inside they become instant targets for flying basketballs and footballs. Some brave parents try to keep cool under a tree near the canal, watching the traffic pass by over the bridge, but odds are, they'll eventually get bonked on the head.

Kids thrive in the chaos. Curly-haired tornadoes dart from the playground to the handball court to the swings. They're climbing and leaping and scraping their knees. A few frazzled park staff members survey the frenzy from a covered area in the park's center, huddling together as if hiding in a bunker.

The soccer field, about half regulation size, offers some breathing room. Coaches chat in Spanish with visiting parents, but the kids are all screaming in English.

Heavy usage gives 96th Street Park that smudged and worn-in look. Yet parents must be thrilled with a space that guarantees their children will get worn out.

It's heartening to see the kids coming and going freely, essentially owning this part of town, without fear in their eyes. This sense of freedom makes the neighborhood exceptional, even if the park's facilities rank as only average.



BT photos by Jim W. Harper

Retrieving wayward soccer balls means someone gets wet.



One drawback: The pavilion cannot be reserved, but then, no food is allowed anyway.

Many activities take place here regularly, and a free movie night arrives on Saturday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m. True to its target audience, the park is showing *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2*.

On October 31, the park hosted the town's Halloween night "Spooktacular." Last year's event featured arts and crafts, a DJ dressed like a giant bat, and a haunted circus tent with a ghost clown and live teenage zombies.

The park also hosts the annual Spring Egg Hunt.

One drawback? The park doesn't allow picnics or food of any kind. Another? The pavilion is not for rent. The soda machine is probably out of order.

The town of Surfside has a surprisingly busy parks and recreation department, considering that its total park

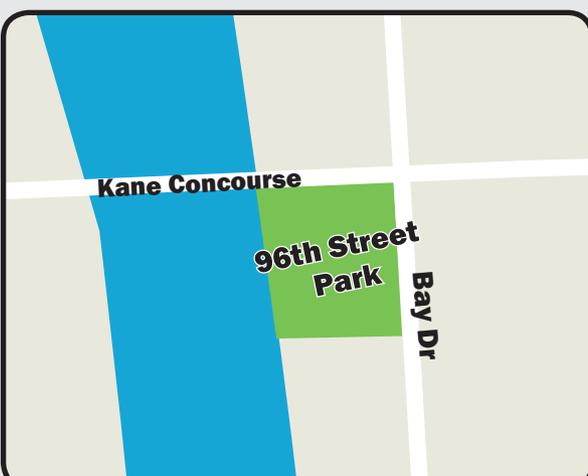
space barely adds up to a few acres. Also noteworthy is that when you call the department, the live employee actually treats you like a human being.

Another pleasant surprise is that the park department's section of the city's website, www.townofsurfsidefl.gov, has a useful calendar (instead of the dreaded ghost calendar on many city websites). Check out times for Tennis Pee Wees and the Senior Bunch Brunch.

Unlike the activities in crazed 96th Street Park, most organized activities take place in Surfside's dazzling beachfront community center, at 93rd Street and Collins Avenue, which was upgraded this year. Most programs there are open to nonresidents, but the pool is not.

The town's four parks include 96th Street Park; Hawthorne Tot Lot on 90th Street and Bay Drive; Paws Up Dog

96TH STREET PARK



Park Rating


9580 Bay Dr.
Surfside 33154
305-866-3635

Hours: Dawn to dusk
Picnic tables: No
Barbecues: No
Picnic pavilions: Yes
Tennis courts: No
Athletic fields: Yes
Night lighting: Yes
Swimming pool: No
Playground: Yes



View from the bridge connecting Bay Harbor Islands to Surfside.



Another view from the Bay Harbor Islands side of the bridge.



April 12, 2014: The town's Spring Egg Hunt packed the park with kids.

Town of Surfside

Park at 93rd and Byron; and Veterans Park and Tennis Center at 8750 Collins. Courts remain open until 10:00 p.m. (305-866-5176).

The town plans to expand and upgrade its park facilities at a cost of \$6.7 million over five years, according to the community center's presentation on its website from May. These plans include nearly \$2 million for the community center's second-floor expansion and \$2.2 million for new park properties. The proposed new spaces include a double lot

at 8712 Byron Avenue, a Miami Beach lot near the tennis courts at 87th Terrace, and 9570 Bay Dr., to expand the existing 96th Street Park.

Already \$700,000 has been committed to the department's five-year plan by developers of the new oceanfront Chateau and Surf Club properties. New income from these properties should be substantial, and the community center presentation tallies it at \$5.4 million annually, with new resort income included. According to a CBS News report on

"super luxury homes," a penthouse at the Surf Club will cost \$35 million.

Surfside benefits from having barely 5000 residents and the extremely wealthy town of Bal Harbour as a neighbor. Its geographic size also makes it manageable. You could walk a circle around the entire town in about a couple of hours.

Right now, somebody's grandchild may be walking or biking around Surfside, breathing the salty air, without a care in the world. Families are walking to and fro across the bridge, not

noticing anything special.

But this little bridge next to 96th Street Park is remarkable. Above it the sky opens wide, and below it the ocean's tide parades pinkish moon jellies and other jetsam in a turquoise glow. About a half mile east is the great Atlantic Ocean. Despite the traffic, the air smells clean.

This is a great place to walk, and a really, really great place to be a kid.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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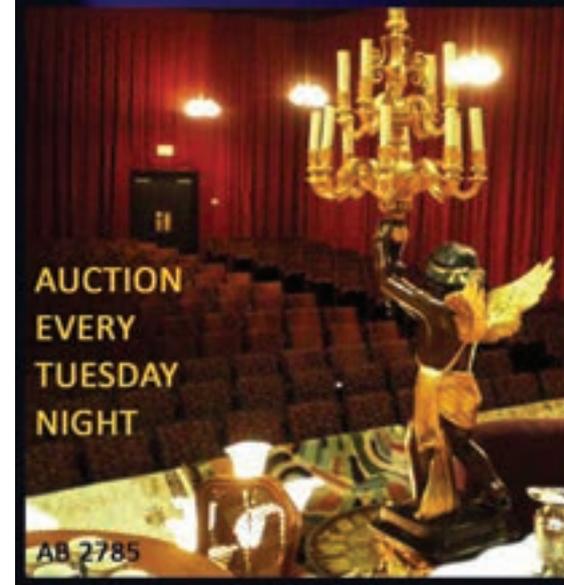
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Twinkle, Twinkle, Dying Tree

Use ties, not nails, to hang holiday lights

By Jeff Shimonski
BT Contributor

It's that time of year again, when the holidays rear up on their hind legs and we spend a lot of money. It's that time of year again to go out and decorate anything stationary with bright, blinking lights.

What a stressful time for those who must put out all the lighting displays and keep them running — but even more so for tree stewards concerned about the long-term damage these lights and electrical connections can cause to trees and palms.

Trees in urban plantings don't win awards for longevity. They often start out as selections of the lowest bid, then are jammed into very small holes on newly constructed sites, and shown minimal or no follow-up care. They may have their roots continuously compacted by vehicles, and they get run into by belligerent drivers — and then they end up getting decorated with loads of lights and other baubles.

I have to admit, the lights can be pretty at night — if they're not left on the tree or palm for months or years. But during the daytime? Definitely not attractive!

The photo that accompanies this article is of an electrical connection attached to the trunk of a palm tree in one of our local municipalities. This is on a street outside lots of shops and restaurants that apparently want to attract shoppers and eaters with pretty lights at night. Every

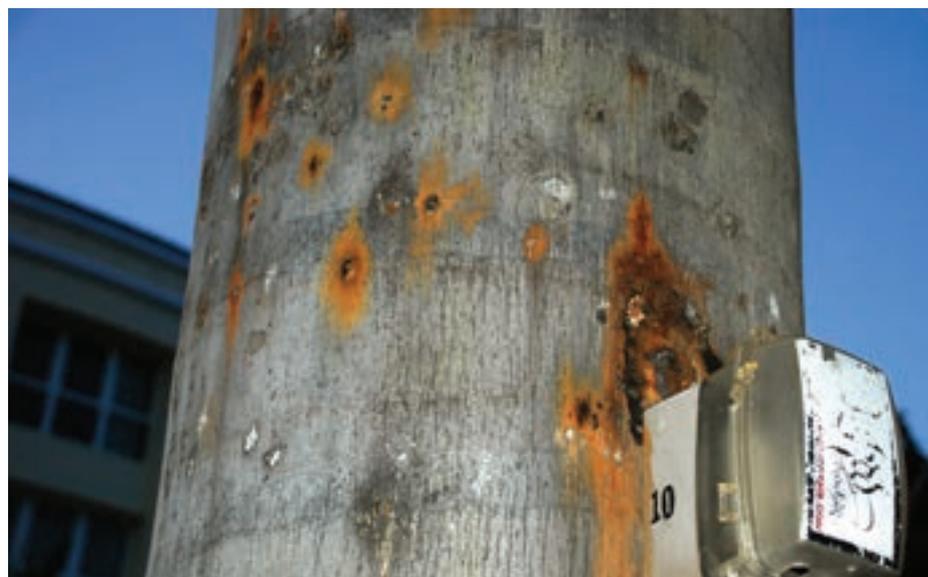
tree has one of these connections and its obvious signs of damage.

Palms don't have the capacity to heal like "regular" trees. Any gouges or damage inflicted on the trunk will never heal. Those holes, rips, and tears will be there forever. And any penetration through the hard tissue of the trunk becomes a route for disease and pathogens to a great source of food. So, please, do not nail stuff to the trunk of a palm. Use zip ties or something similar if you must make the poor plant pretty at night. Then at the end of the holidays, take the stuff off. Give your tree back its dignity.

Many times I've heard the mantra, "We're going to spend as little money and effort as possible to put up these displays so any infrastructure like electrical connections will be left on all year. That way we don't spend more money the next year."

Sure, but now that the damage is done to the tree, what will happen if a pathogen does get inside and begins the process of decay?

I find several species of fungi on a regular basis quietly destroying the structural integrity of trees and palms in South Florida. I can often trace the original "infection court," that place on the plant where the fungus most likely entered the tree. Not surprisingly, it was manmade damage that allowed the pathogen to enter the tree. Usually it was due to cut roots from a construction project years previously, but often the fungus entered through an above-ground



BT photo by Jeff Shimonski

Doesn't anyone notice this poor palm when they walk by?

wound, like an old pruning cut or some other type of damage.

Now, this photo is of a palm in one of South Florida's Tree City USA municipalities. The Tree City designation is awarded when a city meets four standards: it must have a tree board or department; a tree care ordinance; a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita; and finally an Arbor Day observance and proclamation. This designation is supposed to instill "education, public image and community pride, publicity, and form a framework of action."

I think this is a great program. I'm sure a lot of people really like their trees and palms, and would welcome the opportunity to learn more about them and their care. What better authority to carry the torch than the municipality. It sets the standard, right? But where are the politicians and city folks now, who accepted the Tree City designation with lots of fanfare and publicity? Where are they when there are egregious and obvious examples

of tree abuse in their little burg?

I have an idea for the next Arbor Day celebration, April 24, 2015. Make a list of the worst examples of tree pruning or tree abuse (like that in the photo — but make sure to see it in the daytime without the lights on), or perhaps declining specimen trees damaged by construction that was approved by your local building department. Set up a tour.

Instead of planting a tree somewhere, show people and the media how *not* to grow trees. Use this as an opportunity to teach people how to grow and care for trees, and put the politicians and city departments on notice that they can't just forget about our trees once the cameras are turned off.

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

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

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A View from the Sandwich Generation

On the humility of the *schmear*

By Jenni Person
BT Contributor

Y'know how Joey Tribbiani on *Friends* liked sandwiches? Little did we know back then that *sandwich* would mean a very different thing to us someday. I don't know about you guys, but I find myself smack in the middle, wrangling between generations — one before me and one after me — everyone complaining about me yet requiring my support and input. The sandwich generation. Since we're Xers, and I guess some boomers, let's call it our Tribbiani moment.

Here's an example: My mother, who was recently arrested for a hit-and-run (no one was hurt) needs more support than ever. The day of the accident, I was at work and she was taking care of my eight-year-old son, Izzi, who had no school that day. She called me at work, I was in a meeting. She put the police sergeant on the phone.

I left my meeting to hug my traumatized son, deal with the cops, and unfortunately, the press (because it apparently was a very slow news day, including decapitations in the Middle East and racist police brutality in the Midwest...and for a certain TV news channel in Miami, preying on people's weaknesses is more important than actual news). I missed work that day in order to be by her side

for hours of police reporting and investigation, to take care of my kid, to connect her to a lawyer, and to guard her from the media. I didn't sleep a wink that night as stress drowned out any potential Z's.

I started the next day at 6:00 a.m., getting kids out the door. At the office did two days' worth of work. All I wanted was to collapse from exhaustion because of no sleep compounded by the increased churning machine of problem-solving, responsibility, and worry in the face of the situation. But we knew we needed to be with my mom for Shabbat dinner. So I manufactured an illusion of strength and we showed up at her door.

While lighting Shabbat candles, my tween, Goldi, was busy screaming at me for my awful demands that she remain in the gifted program at school, and that we not talk about this right now, in the middle of Shabbat rituals. Even when sent to her room (the guest room at my mom's), she screamed. I made three attempts at bringing her back to the table, but she never calmed down. Finally I couldn't take it any more, between my mother's denial of the accident and her asking the same question every 30 minutes that had already been answered; and Goldi's mighty tween-neediness.

My brain felt like the ball in the finals at the U.S. Open. I reached my limit. I needed to crash. But my mother was suddenly imposing a parental strong arm,



attempting to discipline her adult daughter, who was exhausted from parenting her and two actual children. So we left.

You can see the pull of the melted cheese sandwich of my Tribbiani moment. I'm pretty sure, from what we know of Joey's character, that the Tribbiani Special of our generation is probably a sub — a densely layered, multi-flavored, sauce-dripping sub. It's fitting that our sandwich would be more complicated than our parents' sandwich generation experience. We must balance a different load than our parents did. More families boast two careers.

More parents are single by choice. Money doesn't go as far. Home ownership, the bedrock of family stability of generations past, is now a bigger burden than ever before. School is incomplete and broken. And to top it all off, sandwiches themselves have fallen out of favor, become the carb-filled, gluten-rich enemy of a generation favoring artisanal coffee and home-grown organic kale.

The thing is, we learn from it. We learn about ourselves — and I'm not just

talking about how we learn what a pain in the ass we are going to be to our kids one day when we're old — or what a pain in the ass we are to them now when they're kids and we have to be the ones whose rules they abhor. We also learn who we are, what we are really capable of, and what matters.

It's raw, profound, messy, and intricately deep. These are the relationships involving nakedness — literally. Remember how becoming a parent came with an instant shift in humility? Suddenly you didn't care how you looked or smelled, covered in spit-up or milk or food. And you didn't care about your own birthday anymore as you counted the days, weeks, months, and eventually years of your child's life.

Now, from my view as the *schmear* between two sides of the bagel, there's a new humility. I am more mortal with every second of discovery of my own parents' mortality.

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Wine Pairings for Your T-Day Table

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

By **Bill Citara**
BT Contributor

When the Puritans set foot on Plymouth Rock in 1620 in what is now Massachusetts, they had a lot to be thankful for.

They were thankful that they had gotten there at all after more than two months crossing a stormy Atlantic in a lumbering sow like the *Mayflower*, which was basically a floating septic tank.

They were thankful for finally being free of the oppression of the Church of England, and that they could make a new start in a new place and find new people *they* could oppress. (Tough luck, Native Americans.)

They were thankful for those Native Americans, who revealed to them the pleasures of all-natural, free-range turkeys and organic farm-to-table vegetables so that never again would they have to choke down such English delicacies as bangers and mash or toad-in-the-hole.

For these and many other things, our Puritan ancestors were thankful — so thankful, in fact, that in 1621 they threw a party, invited members of the local Wampanoag tribe, and proceeded to stuff themselves silly.

That party was the first Thanksgiving, which was celebrated sporadically until 1863, when President Lincoln made it a national holiday. Almost 100 years later, Congress, seeking to help out that other great national holiday — the Christmas shopping season — decreed that from then on, Thanksgiving Day would fall on

the fourth Thursday of November.

More recently, that Christmas shopping season has crept earlier and earlier, until now it begins on Thanksgiving itself, meaning turkey and cranberry sauce-addled celebrants can leave their families behind and give thanks for their good fortune by buying crap at the mall, instead of passing out in front of the TV like God and nature intended.

Those of us of the grape persuasion have reason to give thanks, too. Though the traditional Thanksgiving spread, which bounces around between turkey and cranberry sauce and sweet potatoes and Grandma's green bean casserole, is notoriously inhospitable to many fine wines, there are many affordable bottles out there that will play well with such a whackadoodle feast. To quote the immortal Tom Lehrer: "I have a few modest examples here."

An excellent one — sterling, even — is the **2012 Sterling Central Coast Chardonnay**. This is one of those "run right out and buy a case" wines, a rich, full-bodied Chardonnay in the popular California style, but with plenty of varietal character and a strain of citrus acidity keeping all that tropical-apricot fruit honest. It's big enough to stand up to hearty T-Day dishes, but won't overwhelm lighter fare.

Another fruit-forward white — a style I believe partners best with Thanksgiving turkey 'n' trimmings — is the **2012 Santa Florentina Torrontes**. A terrific value at under eight bucks, it

delivers Torrontes's characteristic floral-tropical aromas that become background notes to soft citrus and stone fruit flavors. I'd buy a case of this one too.

When it comes to T-Day dining, rosé is the little black dress of the table. It goes with just about everything. On the more fruit-driven side is the **2013 Goats Do Roam**, a South African blend of Shiraz, Grenache, Mourvèdre, and Gamay Noir that shows off tangy strawberry and raspberry flavors with a tart citrus backbone.

The **2013 Toad Hollow "Eye of the Toad" Rosé of Pinot Noir** is as dry as George Carlin's humor. The nose hints at more fruit than the wine delivers in the mouth, where crisp citrus and berry flavors will be a welcome counterpoint to rich, creamy dishes. Both of these wines take as naturally to turkey as the gobbler.

The **2013 Vistamar Sepia Pinot Noir** ... oh, never mind. It's terrible. The **2012 Leese-Fitch**, on the other hand, dishes a surprising amount of Pinot Noir character and even a touch of Burgundian funk for less than \$12. There's toasty oak and black olives on the nose, spicy plums and berry fruit on the palate, and a lightness that makes it really quite refreshing.

If you're looking for a red wine to cut through those mashed potatoes, giblet gravy, and pumpkin pie, look no further



The sterling Sterling Chardonnay and equally good Santa Florentina Torrontes can be found at the the North Miami Beach Publix and Publix at 18 (305-354-2171, 305-358-3433) for \$11.99 and \$7.49, respectively. The Vistamar Pinot Noir costs \$9.99, and fetchingly named "Eye of the Toad" Rosé is priced at \$11.99 at the North Miami Total Wine & More (14750 Biscayne Blvd., 305-354-3270). For the Jean Saint-Honoré Beaujolais-Village, take \$10.99 and go to the North Miami Beach ABC Fine Wine & Spirits (16355 Biscayne Blvd., 305-944-6525). And at the Whole Foods Markets in North Miami and Aventura (305-892-5500, 305-682-4400) the Leese-Fitch Pinot Noir sells for \$11.99 and the Goats Do Roam rosé sells for \$9.99.

than the **2011 Jean Saint-Honoré Beaujolais-Villages**. Light body, low alcohol, crisp acidity, tangy cherry-berry fruit, it's something we can all be thankful for.

Now let's eat.

Feedback: letters@biscaynetimes.com

Kooky Kitty, Odd Duck

Their little quirks make our animals more like us

By Janet Goodman
BT Contributor

There's much to be said about quirks, but for those things that make us the individuals we are, they're often undervalued, even scoffed at. Early on we long to fit in, to be like our peers. Standing out from the group leaves us feeling like outsiders, vulnerable to criticism, even ostracism.

Unless we're self-confident young people, we run the other way from independent thought or behavior, for fear of rejection. We all dress alike, listen to the same music, hang at the mall. That puts quirkiness on the back burner for later; possibly never, if we wrestle it to the ground, hogtie it, and throw it in the wagon for the long, one-way ride to Dullsville.

Isn't it interesting, then, that when it comes to our pets, we embrace their quirks? We find their off-beat moments to be endearing, hilarious and memorable — okay for them but not for us. "Gives them character," we boast. Accepting quirks without judgment in dogs, cats, and birds, we come to find that these idiosyncrasies are the things we often value most in them. Quirks make our pets more loveable.

We love pets and their unique qualities so much that we share them with the rest of the world. YouTube is testament to the popularity of the quirky pet. Stars are born through animal videos gone viral, like Tyson the Skateboarding

Bulldog. Grumpy Cat has gone beyond being a social media darling to having television specials and product licensing of her famous, impossibly frowny face.

Madison Avenue has long understood the value of using animal quirkiness to help sell things. 9Lives's Morris is "the world's most finicky cat"; StarKist's cultured Charlie the Tuna sports a beatnik-inspired beret and black-rimmed glasses; sugar-high hyperactive Silly Rabbit sells Trix cereal. Would we pay attention to the Geico Gecko if he didn't speak with an Aussie accent or walked on four legs like other lizards?

Beauty catches our eyes, but anthropomorphic characteristics move our hearts. We celebrate quirks because they make our animals *more like us*.

Oh, and we go out of our way to make them *more like us*. How many pets did you see paraded around at Halloween dressed as Kim and Kanye, Batman, and giant frankfurters? The following day, pictures of them were uploaded like crazy to Facebook. We get a royal kick out of holiday apparel for them, and the pet industry makes a royal buck from our need to make our furry friends *more like us*.

We buy sets of miniature Broyhill furniture for them to lounge on, fancy gourmet meals to eat, Louis Vuitton designer leashes with matching collars, and satin bows for their hair. We do it because we have a need to humanize them.

I admit I'm guilty of this too. My cat Tim and I do a little front-porch



Broadway performance where I stand behind him, raise him up on his back paws and give him voice, singing and dancing to "If I Were a Rich Man" from *Fiddler on the Roof*. Of course, Tim has the Yiddish accent of Tevye; that always makes me laugh and Tim doesn't seem to mind.

Over the years, I've loved pets with cute habits. Snoopy the Cat would flick and flutter the end of her tail whenever I'd say her name in a high-pitched, pig-calling voice. Katy the Spaniel would howl only during the opening theme song to our favorite TV show, *Law & Order*. My couch buddy's wet noodle-like ears would barely stand upright at the first plunky base notes and by the ending's siren, she was in full-out, head-up, spine-chilling *aahooooo*. Gosh, I miss that.

Bo the Catahoula has an odd bathroom routine. He trots around the backyard carrying a giant red Kong toy, gently places it on the ground, then relieves himself of number two. Sugar was a sneezy one-eyed kitty (I could've

sworn she was winking at me), and her son Zeus meowed and rapturously flip-flopped at my feet at the mere sight of a metal comb in hand.

My sister has a cat named Moe-Moe that only drinks water by using her front paw as a ladle of sorts. I filmed her for three minutes scooping and drinking, scooping and drinking.

Long after our pets are gone, these are the little things we'll remember with a smile. Zany bits of character that made them uniquely themselves — and darn near human — are why they were so dear. Yes, they had many other wonderful and not so wonderful qualities, but quirks really made them stand out as special beings. They say God has a sense of humor; maybe that's why He made them *more like us*.

Janet Goodman is a Miami Shores-based dog trainer, animal-talent wrangler, and principal of Good Dog Bad Dog, Inc. Contact her at info@gooddogbaddogmiami.com.

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Dining Guide

Restaurant Listings

The Biscayne Corridor's most comprehensive restaurant guide. Total this month: 224.

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.

\$= \$10 and under
\$\$= \$20
\$\$\$= \$30
\$\$\$=\$40
\$\$\$\$=\$50 and over

MIAMI

Brickell / Downtown

15th & Vine Kitchen 485 Brickell Ave., 305-503-0373

In the 15th floor space originally occupied by Eos, the Viceroy's top-end restaurant now focuses its décor on spectacular bay views (particularly from an outdoor garden/pool terrace). And the mostly small-plates menu of accessible internationally influenced New American fare is more Miami-appropriate, too. Especially recommended: Asian-inspired items like spicy ginger meatballs with sweet sambal chili sauce, or lump crab croquettes with sriracha, remoulade, and a frisée/fennel salad. Favorites like flatbreads and sliders plus a classy setting make this a striking business-lunch option. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Area 31 270 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Atelier Monnier 848 Brickell Ave. #120, 305-456-5015

Sesame Street's Cookie Monster adores all cookies. As a more specialized Macaron Monster, we assure you that this French bakery/café's exquisite macarons (not clunky coconut macaroons, but delicate, crackly crusted/moist inside almond cookies, sandwiching creamy ganache fillings in flavors ranging from vanilla or praline to seasonal fruits) are reason enough to drop in daily, perhaps hourly. That the place also hand-crafts equally authentic French breads, complex pastries, baguette sandwiches, salads, soups, quiches, omelet's, ice creams, and chocolates is a bonus – icing on the gateaux. \$\$

Atrio 1395 Brickell Ave., 305-503-6529

Admittedly, the Conrad Hotel's top-end restaurant has had its ups and downs since its early days as one of the few exciting fine-dining restaurants in the Brickell/downtown area. But Atrio is ready for rediscovery. Despite Brickell's recent restaurant explosion, few venues are as spectacularly suitable for a sophisticated breakfast, lunch, or dinner for grown-ups who'd rather not shout over DJs. Panoramic views of Miami from the 25th floor are now matched by locally oriented dishes, including a mango/lime mayo-dressed lobster sandwich, crisp-skinned snapper with grapefruit salsa and basil aioli, a bracing orange tart, even citrus butter in the bread basket. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

Barú Urbano 1001 S. Miami Ave., 305-381-5901

"Hot, hip, Hispanic" is a huge understatement to describe the street-smart urban flair of this tropical restoulounge. After about 9:00 p.m., droves of high-energy young partiers make the place seem more Latin singles bar than eatery. Nevertheless, the largely but not exclusively Colombian-inspired, Latin/Caribbean comfort-food cuisine can be inspiring. We're partial to snacks like the arepa Colombiana, heaped with fresh white cheese, and the sinful chivito sandwich (steak, ham, melted mozzarella, and a fried egg). But there are also full entrées like a bandeja paisa (Colombia's belly-busting mixed platter of proteins and carbs). \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Batch Gastropub 30 SW 12th St., 305-808-5555

The name refers to Batch's signature novelty items, which we think of as gourmet fast-food cocktails: high-quality fresh ingredients (some barrel-aged), pre-mixed in batches and served on tap for instant gratification. But a menu designed by E. Michael Reidt (ex-Area 31), means solid foods are serious chef-driven pub grub: the Mac Attack, sophisticated mac 'n' cheese featuring gnocchi and aged Gruyere; sinfully succulent burgers, substituting brisket for leaner beef; nachos upgraded with duck confit; wood-oven pizzas topped with unusual combinations like pumpkin plus shortrib; duck fat popcorn; housemade sodas. \$\$

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, unpretentious 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Bistro BE 1111 SW 1st Ave., 305-375-0975

When you get one of those cravings for some saladegegratineer-degetienkaos or oostendegarnaalkrokotten, this is da place. It's currently Miami's only Belgian bistro. The authentic dishes, while upscaled and sometimes lightened, reflect Flemish cuisine's typical blend of French refinement with Germanic/Dutch comfort-food qualities, and while the menu items may sound formidable, those above are actually just a bacon-wrapped goat cheese gratin with salad, and elegant shrimp croquettes. More familiar are Belgium's incomparable fries, served with numerous sauces; a variety of musel pots (seven at dinner); and about 60 Belgian beers. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

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 tastebud-tickling snapper carpaccio; an elegant nest of mee krab (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 wonton beggar's purses with a shrimp/pork/mushroom/woodchestnut filling and tamarind sauce. \$\$

Brasileiro 801 Brickell Bay Dr., 786-502-3829

Fittingly, the indoor/outdoor bay-view space in the Four Ambassadors, occupied by Miami's first Brazilian rodizio restaurant

back in the early 1980s, is now home to a 21st-century upgrade. For insatiable carnivores and fans of Latin America's best dinner show, there's the traditional parade of tableside, sword-wielding gauchos carving all-you-can-eat meats, including must-not-miss medium-rare picanhas, delectably fat-capped sirloin. For more modern and/or light eaters, prepared dishes by Gully Booth, one of Miami's best-kept-secret chefs, include goat cheese croquettes, stuffed dates, and crab cakes Martha Stewart once proclaimed the best she'd eaten. \$\$\$

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 fab 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 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. \$\$\$

Burger & Beer Joint 900 S. Miami Ave. #130, 305-523-2244

While not quite Miami's first hip hangout featuring high-quality burgers, the original South Beach B&B certainly goosed the gourmet-burger craze in a major way. This Brickell branch has all the familiar favorites, including the ten-pound Mother Burger – really more good gimmick than good. Otherwise B&B, which still consistently makes "Top 10" lists, features a huge selection of basics in addition to beef (bison, turkey, chicken, veggie, seafoods); nicely balanced topping combos; and enough succulent sides (tempura-battered pickles, fried green beans, mini-corn dogs) to make a meal that's totally burger-free. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Seasalt and Pepper 422 NW N. River Dr., 305-440-4200

Unlike older Miami River market/restaurants like Garcia's, run by fishing families, this stylishly retro/modern-industrial converted warehouse (once Howard Hughes's plane hangar) has an owner who ran South Beach's hottest 1990s nightspots, so expect celebratory sightings with your seafood. What's unexpected: a blessedly untrendy menu, with simply but skillfully prepared wood-oven-cooked fish and clay-pot, shellfish casserolles. Standouts include luxurious lobster thermador, as rich as it is pricey; flavorful heads-on jumbo prawns, prepared classic Italian-style (as are many dishes here); even one low-budget boon: impeccably fresh PEI mussels in herb sauce. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Cantina La Veinte 495 Brickell Ave., 786-623-6135

In a spectacularly stylized indoor/outdoor waterfront setting, this first U.S. venture from Mexico's Cinbersol Group serves upscale modern-Mexican fare with international influences transcending Tex-Mex. No ground-beef tacos here. Rather, fillings range from cochinita pibil (pork in achote/orange sauce) to grilled bone marrow – even escamoles: butter-sautéed ant eggs. For the less adventurous, fried calamari with a Jamaican-inspired hibiscus reduction or dobladitas de jaibas suave, delectably crunchy softshell crabs wrapped in flour tortillas with cream/kicky jalapeño sauce, are irresistible. Bonus: A specialty market/deli with imported packaged goods, cheeses, pastries, more. \$\$\$

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 withaji amarillo cream sauce. But no worries, old fans. Some of the old favorite dishes remain. \$\$

Cipriani 465 Brickell Ave., 786-329-4090

Derived, like all Cipriani family restaurants worldwide, from legend-ary Harry's Bar in Venice (a favorite of Truman Capote, Hemingway, and other famous folks since 1931), this glamorous indoor/outdoor riverfront location in Icon has two absolutely must-not-miss menu items, both invented at Harry's and reproduced here to perfection:

beef carpaccio (drizzled artfully with streaks of creamy-rich mustard vinaigrette, not mere olive oil) and the Bellini (a cocktail of prosecco, not champagne, and fresh white peach juice). Venetian-style liver and onions could convert even liver-loathers. Finish with elegant vanilla meringue cake. \$\$\$

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 Om 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. \$\$\$

Desole Metro Pizza Bar 333 SE 2nd St., 305-381-9505

This family-owned pizza/wine bar serves pies more evocative of those we've had in Italy than anywhere else in town. There are normal round pizzas, but also the rectangular Roman street-food sorts you can buy by the foot (up to about a yard). Order the latter variously topped (perhaps prosciutto/arugula in one section, fresh mozzarella and tomato in another) for perfect party food. Also available: starters, salads, homemade pastas, and a surprisingly expansive wine list. Ambiance evokes Italy, too, with owner conviviality making the place welcoming even for single diners. \$\$\$

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 surf surf or game, too, while waiting for your choice of the house specialty: supersized 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-raw crapola, either, but treats like Serrano ham croquetas, a spinach/leek tart with Portobello mushroom sauce, or shrimp-topped eggplant timbales. The best seats are on the glam rooftop patio. \$\$\$



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Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

Doraku 900 S. Miami Ave., 305-373-4633

Happy hour comes twice daily (after work and lunch) at this second location of a popular South Beach sushi, pan-Asian, small-plates restaurant, bringing discounted prices on treats like rock shrimp tempura with spicy aioli. Regular prices are reasonable, too, for seafood flown in daily, and makis displaying solid creativity rather than gimmickry. Especially enjoyable are items accented by Japanese ingredients rarely found in Americanized sushi bars, like the Geisha Roll's astringent shiso leaf, beautifully balancing spicy tuna, pickled radish, and rich eel sauce. A huge sake menu, too. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Downtown Bistro 114 SE 1st St., 305-374-7284

From a transplanted French couple, this pleasant place (whose restrained ambiance, resistant to terminal hipster invasion, makes it suitable for casual business lunches) serves a mix of traditional Parisian corner-bistro fare and more modern fusion dishes. The latter range from familiar tapas (bacon-wrapped dates, mini-crab cakes, sesame oil-infused tuna tartare) to simple but sophisticated surprises (velvety butternut squash soup shooters). But classics rule, especially lunchtime's perfectly mustard vinaigrette-dressed frisée salad with lardons and poached egg, or solidly satisfying steak au poivre with fries. Portion sizes satisfy, too. \$\$\$-\$\$\$



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 crispy beer-battered moist cod, served with hand-cut fries and "mushy [mashed] peas," plus homemade tartar sauce and ketchup. All desserts are also made in-house, including a deliciously rich (but worth it) sticky date pudding with toffee sauce. Tie down your dental implants. They're in for a wild ride. \$\$

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. \$\$\$

The Filling Station & Garage Bar 95 SE 2nd St., 786-425-1990

This fun, locally oriented dive, opened in 1994, was hip more than a decade before downtown was. And its 2008 relocation to larger quarters, plus two subsequent expansions, signal that it has more than kept up with the explosion of newer neighborhood hotspots, without pretensions or yuppified prices. On the fresh, hefty hamburgers, true Miami weirdness is displayed in toppings like peanut butter or Nutella. Other standouts: tangy-spicy Buffalo wings; homemade tater tots; the oil pan (fried pickles and onion rings with two sauces); and an ever-changing list of craft beers. \$\$\$

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 focaccia 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 pasta 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. \$\$\$

Havana 1957 1451 S. Miami Ave., 305-381-6651

If you never had the chance to enjoy classic Cuban dishes in glam 1950s Havana (pre-He Who Must Not Be Named), you can now at this nostalgic restaurant. Eat your way through the day, from hefty four-egg/croqueta breakfasts to late-night mini pan con bistec bar bites, surrounded by old-school memorabilia, music, and mojitos. Admittedly, prices are higher than those at average Miami Cuban eateries. But daily specials, including Wednesday's especially tasty mojo-marinated chicken fricassee in sweet-savory criollo sauce, are a great value. And the time trip is priceless. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 through the afternoon, fueled by the Lawyer's Liquid Lunch, a vodka martini spiked with sweetened espresso. \$\$\$

La Mar by Gaston Acurio 500 Brickell Key Dr., 305-913-8358

It's said that Peruvian cuisine is Latin America's most varied and sophisticated. Reserve a patio table at this indoor/outdoor Mandarin Oriental eatery to experience Miami's best for yourself – along with some of the city's best bayfront vistas. The specialty is seafood, and the beautifully balanced recipes of Acurio (called Peru's food ambassador to the world), executed flawlessly by onsite executive chef Diego Oka, especially elevate ceviches, similar but more delicate tiraditos, uniquely lively "Nikkei" (Peruvian-Japanese fusion) sushi creations, and elegant whipped potato/fresh seafood causas, to world-class fine-dining level. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$

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 Nicoise with grilled fresh tuna, seared salmon with mango salsa, and other yuppie favorites. \$\$\$

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 vegetables 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. \$\$\$

L'Entrecote de Paris 1053 SE 1st Ave., 305-755-9995

If menu choices makes you nuts, this place, originally a Parisian eatery with locations in Brazil, is the restaurant for you. There's only one prix fixe meal offered: an entrecote steak with a famed creamy sauce of 21 ingredients (here, predominantly curry), accompanied by a walnut-garnished mixed greens/tomato salad and shoestring fries, plus a crunchy-crusty baguette. Your only choice is how you like your steak precision-cooked. À la carte desserts are indeed extensive; avoid stress by choosing a macaron flight of mixed flavors. \$\$\$

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. \$

Mint Leaf 1063 SE 1st Ave., 305-358-5050

Part of London's famous Woodlands Group, this stylish spot, like its 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 scrumptious street food. We've happily assembled whole meals of the vegetarian chaat (snacks) alone. And dosa (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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

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 roasted jalapeño/limo mayo), but this time with seats! What to eat? Ceviches, natch. 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. \$\$

N by Naoe 661 Brickell Key Dr., 305-947-6263

Like local secret-star chef Kevin Cory's dinner-only Naoe, newer lunch-only N by Naoe shares a reservations-only, omakase-only (chef's choice) policy – and actually shares the same door. Turn left for Naoe, right for N. Main differences: N has one elegant commu-



nal table, perfect for impressive power lunches (vs. Naoe's intimate individual seating), and prix fixe lunches are \$80 vs. \$200 for dinner. Admittedly, lunch is abbreviated: soup and multi-course bento box plus one dessert, without the dozen or so sushi dishes. But bentos are much bigger (seven compartments vs. four), and equally unique. Think of N as a relatively bargain-priced introduction to Naoe, or as a revelatory dining experience on its own. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 quickly decorated bistro, where the kitchen is helmed by *Top Chef* contestant Micah 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 house-made chicken/apple sausage, hibiscus syrup, and maple granules. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

NIU Kitchen 134 NE 2nd Ave., 786-542-5070

This contemporary Catalan eatery is located, according to its three playful proprietors, "somewhere between Dali's moustache and Gaudi's Sagrada Familia." Actually, it's in the heart of downtown, but the description does reflect the Barcelona-born chef's weirdly wonderful yet seriously skilled twists on tapas. Instead of Catalonia's rustic, bread-thickened tomato soup, there's a refined cold tomato broth poured over a mustard ice cream-topped crouton. Mato, a simple cheese and honey dessert, translates as custardy fresh cheese atop eggplant "jam," with candied hazelnuts. \$\$\$

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 greasably 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. \$\$\$

Perfecto 1450 Brickell Ave., 305-372-0620

This transplant from Barcelona features décor that mixes rustic and urban, plus modern music and traditional tapas (the Spanish, not global, kind). Must-have: imported 5J jamon Iberico de Bellota from acorn-fed pata negra pigs – lusciously marbled, tender yet toothsome, the ultimate in cured hams. But other tapas like the salmorejo en vaso (a creamy, pumped Andalusian variation on gazpacho), papatas bravas (crisp-fried potatoes with spicy aioli), fuet (Catalan salami, similar to French saucisson sec), and crispy prawns are pretty perfect, too. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 gentrified 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 fiocchi 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. \$\$

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. \$

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 uttappam, 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 www.rosamexicano.com

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; 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. \$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

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

Though Neapolitan-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 (type 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, EVOO) prove some rules should be broken. \$\$\$

Sumi Yakitori 21 SW 11th St., 786-360-5570

If your definition of yakitori has been formed from typical Americanized sticky-sweet skewers, this late-night place's grilled offerings, flavored with the subtly smoky savor of imported Japanese binchotan charcoal will be a revelation. Décor is more stunningly stylish than at chef/owner Jeffrey Chan's adjacent Momi



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OakTavernMiami

Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

Ramen, but cooking is equally authentic for items like skewered duck (served with scallion sauce), juicy sausage-stuffed chicken wings, bacon-wrapped hard-boiled quail eggs, or grilled hamachi kama (super succulent yellowtail collar). Supplemental dishes, including pork buns and sautéed veggies, also excel. \$\$\$

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); vinegared 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 Fonz 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$

Toscana Divino 900 S. Miami Ave., 305-571-2767

When an upscale restaurant remains perennially packed during a recession, you figure they're offering something way beyond the usual generic Italian fare. While familiar favorites (Caprese salad,

etc.) are available, the changing menu is highlighted by harder-to-find Tuscan specialties, albeit luxe versions: pappa al pomodoro, tomato/bread peasant soup elevated by an organic poached egg and finocchiona (a regional fennel salami); an authentic-tasting "fiorentina" porterhouse, with smoked potato purée plus more traditional veggies. A budget-conscious boon: changing three-course lunches and early-bird dinners. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$\$

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 "bistrolounge." 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 r'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 multi-dimensional oyster pan stew, or tartare of tuna and burstingly ripe tomato topped with a delicate sous vide egg. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Verde Restaurant & Bar 1103 Biscayne Blvd., 305-375-8282

Located in the Pérez Art Museum Miami, this indoor/outdoor bay-front bistro, a project of restaurateur Stephen Starr, serves elegant, eco-friendly fare to match PAMM's green certification. (Museum admission *not* required.) Seafood crudos shine: hamachi "sashimi" slices flash-marinated in a subtle citrus/ponzu emulsion and enlivened by jalapeño relish; a sprout-topped, smoothly sauced tuna tartare with lemon and horseradish flavors substituting for clichéd sesame. Light pizzas topped with near paper-thin zucchini slices, goat cheese, roasted garlic EVOO, and squash blossoms virtually define farm-to-table. And doughnuts with Cuban coffee dip are the definitively local dessert. \$\$-\$\$\$

Wolfgang's Steakhouse 315 S. Biscayne Blvd., 305-487-7130

Proprietor Wolfgang Zweiner worked for decades at Brooklyn's legendary Peter Luger's before opening the first of his own much-praised, old-school steakhouses in 2003, which explains the quality of the USDA prime-grade steaks here – dry-aged on premises for bold, beefy flavor and tender but toothsome texture. Prices are prodigious but so are portions. The 32-ounce porterhouse for two easily feeds three or four folks curious to taste the difference. Plentiful sides include a bacon starter favored by those who love Canadian bacon over pork belly. Personally, just the simple, superb steaks leave us happy as clams. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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

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 impossibly light white-and-dark chocolate mousse cake will hook you for life. \$\$-\$\$

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. \$\$\$

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 figciutto: arugula, gorgonzola dolce, caramelized onions, pine nuts, fresh figs, and prosciutto. Free parking behind the building. \$\$

Blackbrick 3451 NE 1st Ave. #103; 305-573-8886

Inspiration for the Chinese food at this hotspot came from authentic flavors Richard Hales (from Sakaya Kitchen) encountered during travels in China, but the chef's considerable imagination figures in mightily. Example: Don't expect General Tso's chicken on the changing menu. The General's Florida Gator, though, is a distinct possibility. Dishes less wild but still thrilling, due to strong spicing: bing (chewy Chinese flatbread) with char sui, garlic, and scallions; two fried tofu/veggie dishes (one hot, one not) savory enough to bring bean curd maligners (and confirmed carnivores) to their knees. \$\$-\$\$\$

Bocce Bar 3252 NE 1st Ave. #107; 786-245-6211

A bocce court outside plus interior décor imported from Italy, floor to ceiling, serve notice that this eatery's shareable small plates (salumi/cheeses, pastas, and composed antipasti featuring perfect produce) are thoroughly Italian-inspired. But all are elevated by inventive twists from chef Timon Balloo, of adjacent SugarCane. Vegetarian dishes especially impress: creamy polenta with a poached egg, savory rapini, and shaved truffle; crispy artichoke with mustard-seed aioli; Thumbelina carrots with mascarpone and "pistachio granola," a dish that magically makes the common root veggie a mouthful of wonderfulness; 25 year-aged balsamico ice cream. \$\$\$

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 rillettes (a rustic pâté) with a crusty baguette, steak with from-scratch frites, salmon atop rataouille, 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 rillettes, 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. \$\$\$

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Thanks Giving

Menu

Turkey Vegetable Soup

••

Tuna's Garden Salad

••

Traditional Roasted Turkey Dinner
Served with Stuffing, Sweet Potatoes,
Vegetables and Cranberry Sauce

••

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entrees::

Shakshuka Moroccan Brunch 12
2 eggs baked with tomato, onion, pepper, and spices served with toast (add merguez sausage 4)

Egyptian Brunch 14
2 eggs scrambled with Basterma (cured beef tenderloin), served with Egyptian-style fava beans, feta cheese, molasses/tahini spread, and pita bread

Croque Madame 12
French ham, gruyere, and béchamel on brioche toast topped with a fried egg, with mixed greens

Merguez Benedict 16
with harissa hollandaise and pesto roasted potatoes

Salmon Benedict 16
with dill hollandaise and pesto roasted potatoes

Brioche French Toast 10
with candied pecans and syrup

Mascarpone Pancakes 10
with mascarpone cream and strawberry compote

SAMPLES FROM OUR MENU

dips::

4 each; 3 for 10; 5 for 15

Besara, Hummus, Tzatziki, Baba Ghanoug, Tahini and Spicy Feta with pita bread

small plates::

Spanakopita 5
Spinach and feta phyllo pie

Baked Kibby 7
Cracked wheat mixed with ground beef, pine nuts, and onions

Stuffed Grape Leaves 6

Fried Calamari 8

Stuffed Cabbage 6

pita sliders::

3 per order

Lamb Burger 12
With harissa, tzatziki, tomato, and lettuce

Falafel 9
With Israeli salad, red cabbage slaw, and tahini

from the oven::

Pastitsio 10
Baked penne layered with béchamel and beef ragout

Moussaka 12
Baked eggplant layered with potatoes, béchamel, and beef ragout

Beef Bourguignon 15
Sirloin braised in a light wine sauce, mushrooms, carrots, pearl onions, and mashed potatoes

Vegetable Tagine 12
Seasonal vegetables in saffron sauce served with couscous and harissa

Fish Tagine 16
Mahi baked with saffron, potatoes, tomatoes, and garlic served with couscous and harissa

large plates::

Kebab Plate 14
Chicken or kofta served with rice and tzatziki

Osso Buco 18
Lamb shank braised in wine sauce with mash

Coq Au Vin 15
Chicken thighs braised in wine sauce with mash

Roasted Whole Branzino 26
With caramelized onion rice pilaf

Chicken Milanese 14

Spaghetti Bolognese 12

Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

The Butcher Shop Beer Garden & Grill 165 NW 23rd St., 305-846-9120

Unbelievable but true: At the heart of this festive, budget-friendly beer-garden restaurant is an old-school gourmet butcher shop, where sausages from classic (brats, chorizo) to creative (lamb and feta) are house-made, and all beef is certified USDA prime – rarely found at even fancy steakhouses. Take your selections home to cook, or better yet, eat them here, accompanied by intriguing Old/ New World sauces, garnishes (like bleu cheese fritters), sides, and starters. Desserts include a bacon sundae. Beer? Try an organic brew, custom-crafted for the eatery. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Craft Bar & Q 350 NE 24th St. #109, 786-615-6622

From the pitmasters behind the Passion BBQ food truck, this relaxing brick-and-mortar hangout features the same slow-smoked pulled pork, spareribs, and especially succulent brisket. All are available on appropriately garnished platters or sandwiches, and as inventive twists in quesadillas, nachos, and an elaborate "burnt wedge" salad. The "craft" in the name refers to the perfect accompaniment to perfect "cue": craft beers, draft and bottled. Solid sides range from fairly normal (tropical pineapple coleslaw) to way weird (foie-gras braised collards). Save room for cakes and pies from food truck friend Marie's Delights. \$\$

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. \$\$

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 Gruyère 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 District 190 NE 46th St., 305-573-4199

At the house whose original restaurant tenant was One Ninety, décor has been renovated dramatically from shabby to chic, and the pan-American gastropub cuisine also matches a more mature Miami. Horacio Rivadero's dishes reflect both Latin and American influences with considerable creative flair and fun. Favorites: lobster tacos with pickled cabbage, aji Amarillo escabeche, and crisped shallots; luscious lamb tartare, featuring toasted pignolias and mustard oil; and the Black Magic mousse, with vanilla/sweet potato drizzles, housemade marshmallows, and a pistachio cookie. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Enriqueta's Sandwich Shop 186 NE 29th St., 305-573-4681

This Cuban breakfast/lunch old-timer actually serves more than sandwiches (including mammoth daily specials) – and since reopening after a fire, does so in a cleanly renovated interior. But many hardcore fans never get past the parking lot's ordering window, and outdoors really is the best place to manage Enriqueta's mojo-marinated messy masterpiece: pan con bistec, dripping with sautéed onions, melted cheese, and potato sticks; tomatoes make the fats and calories negligible. Accompany with fresh orange juice or café con leche, and you'll never want anything else, except maybe a bib. \$

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 pintos (complexly layered Basque-style tapas). From a self-serve bar, choose from a changing selection of skewered stacks; brie, homemade fig jam, 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Fireman Derek's Bake Shop & Café 2818 N. Miami Ave., 786-449-2517

As a genuine City of Miami firefighter, Derek Kaplan puts fires out, but since age 15 he's also been lighting fires – in his oven. The decades of baking experience shows in both his locally award-winning signature pies, especially Key lime and salted caramel "crack," and in changing produce-based seasonal selections. For full, balanced (i.e., all-pie) breakfasts and lunches, there are also savory options like mac 'n' cheese pie, or satisfyingly rich, totally non-sissy quiches. \$\$\$

Gigi 3470 N. Miami Ave., 305-573-1520

As befits its location in artful, working-class Wynwood, Gigi 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 housemade 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. \$

iSushi Café 3301 NE 1st Ave. #107, 305-548-8751

Ever get tempted by supermarket sushi rolls, just because they're there? Don't be. This quick-casual café has a menu similar to that at sushi/Japanese small-plates, fast-food take-out joints (individual nigiri, makis, and party platters, plus small plates like edamame,

seaweed, etc.) and comparable preparation speed, too, but with ingredient quality and freshness that's more upscale. Prices are actually considerably cheaper than those of market makis that might have been sitting around for days. Additionally, ambiance, though casual, is stylish enough for a date or dinner with friends. \$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Kouzina Greek Bistro 3535 NE 2nd Ave., 305-392-1825

Across the tracks from Midtown Miami, this hidden-by-hedges spot features a patio with authentically festive ambiance and food by Alexia Apostolidi, also authentically Greek but known to locals for her critically acclaimed fare at defunct Ariston. The menu includes many mezes, both traditional (like tsatziki and eggplant spreads) and unusual (bacalao croquettes with garlic purée and roasted beet coulis; sesame-sprinkled manouri cheese envelopes), plus limited entrées highlighted by cheese/herb-crust lamb at dinner and lunchtime's lamb pita wrap. Don't miss the semolina purée side – heavenly Greek cheese grits. \$\$\$

Kush 2003 N. Miami Ave., 305-576-4500

From the tracks behind the popular Coral Gables artisanal beer pub LoKAl – voted a "Most Green Restaurant in Florida" by the Nature Conservancy – Kush pushes the concept farther: that farm-to-table dishes (some from LoKAl, others created new) and craft beers aren't mere craft; they're art. Which you'll find on the walls. On tables you'll find, among other things, the Kush & Hash burger: Florida-raised beef, ground in-house, served with hash (the edible, not smokable, kind), bacon, fried egg, and housemade ketchup on a waffle bun, with a side of maple syrup. Edgy enough for ya? \$\$\$-\$\$\$



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Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

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 attentive wine/beer choices and laidback live music. No cover, no attitude. \$\$

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. \$

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., 305-576-6066

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 mezes: 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

Mignonette 210 NE 18th St., 305-374-4635

From Day One this Old Florida/New Orleans fusion oyster bar, from Blue Collar's chef/owner Danny Serfer and food blogger Ryan Roman, received myriad raves for its cuisine and informed service. All manner of oysters (roughly six superb selections available raw daily, and cooked choices including subtly brandy-sauced oysters Bienville), plus other superb seafood and Blue Collar's famous veggie creations – even a dynamite prime rib – is of a caliber that catalyzes its own neighborhood gentrification, rapidly. \$\$\$

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 hangout 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. \$\$\$

Mmmm 2519 NW 2nd Ave., 786-703-3409

On the same strip as Wynwood Kitchen & Bar and Joey's, this more casual alt-culture café is a sandwich/soup/salad spot with a difference – chef Alan McLennan, whose mentors include Michelin 3-star chefs Michel Guerard and Fredy Giradet. The elite French training is reflected in Mmmm's signature items: tartines, open-face sandwiches on crusty toasted sourdough indistinguishable from Paris's famed Poilane bread, except made in Miami. Among the perfectly balanced toppings are an especially tasty tuna and artichoke with olive mayo, or daily specials like crab/avocado. Wine, too, and locally made tropical ice creams from Azucar. \$\$

Moloko 3201 N. Miami Ave. #104, 305-572-9336

Though self-subtitled "The Art of Crêpe and Coffee," this cool café, in the Shops at Midtown Miami, offers much more. Also on the

free-wheeling menu are unusual items like a reinvented Hawaiian loco moco rice plate (typically topped with a hamburger patty, fried egg, and brown gravy, here featuring protein of choice, eggs any style, and spinach cream sauce). The coffee, local Panther, and plumply stuffed sweet or savory crêpes are indeed art forms, but you'll find changing exhibits by local artists, too. Special happenings include live music and kids-eat-free evenings. \$\$\$

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; shoestring fries that rival Belgium's best; mouthwatering maple-basted bacon; miraculously terrific tofu (crispy panko-crusted 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/restauranteur 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 bahn mi (with pork belly and foie gras) to down-home buttermilk biscuits with bacon butter, and homemade 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. \$\$\$

Pizza Pazza 275 NE 18th St. #109, 786-762-2238

Close your eyes while eating Naples-born Sal Matuozzo's wood-oven pies and you'll be in Naples. Crusts: Thin rather than Roman super-thin; there's just enough chewy thickness to emphasize you're eating honest bread, not a cracker. Toppings: High-quality (fresh fior di latte, not commercial mozzarella); intensely flavorful sauce featuring imported San Marzano tomatoes; garnishes including fresh black truffles and applied judiciously enough that each bite tastes slightly different – neither ungenerously Spartan nor crassly overloaded. Prices: higher than typical neighborhood pizzerias, lower than a plane ticket to Italy. \$\$

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 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. \$\$\$

Prohibition 3404 N. Miami Ave., 305-438-9191

Frankly, we don't get why this expansive, high-ceilinged space with enormous front windows and open kitchen is so often described as evocative of a Prohibition-era speakeasy; ambiance here is artfully and amusingly sinful, not secretive. Fare is a fun, familiar mix of modern comfort foods (truffled lobster mac 'n' cheese, NY strip steak with truffled parmesan fries, many other items featuring truffle oil) and retro favorites like meatballs. It's simple, solid stuff served in generous portions to match the menu items that best truly evoke Prohibition times: hefty, old-fashioned, two-fisted cocktails. \$\$\$

R House 2727 NW 2nd Ave., 305-576-0240

A strikingly stylish restaurant that's part art gallery could be pretentious, in a still largely ungentrified area of cutting-edge artsy yet still working-class Wynwood. But modular movable walls to accommodate changing installations, and its own name make it clear the art component is a serious working gallery. Hardworking chef/owner Rocco Carulli demonstrates a locals orientation with a menu highlighted by skillfully crafted, hearty entrées (Brazilian seafood moqueta stew, coffee/chili-rubbed short ribs, sweet pea falafel) available in affordable half-portion: small plates of big food for starving artists. \$\$\$

Riviera Focacceria Italiana 3252 NE 1st Ave., 786-220-6251

This kitchen actually serves a full menu of specialties firmly rooted in Liguria, the northern Italian coastal region around Genoa, pesto capital of the universe. Pastas like panisotti (plump vegetarian triangles containing ricotta plus chard, spinach, and typical herbs/spices) are definitely not generically Italian. Still, the reason to come here: the variously stuffed or topped focaccias, particularly signature focaccia di Recco (a Ligurian hill town). Two ultra-thin layers (almost transparent) of light char-broiled bread filled with imported stracchino, a mild fresh cheese like mozzarella, but swoon-inducingly oozy-soft. \$\$\$

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

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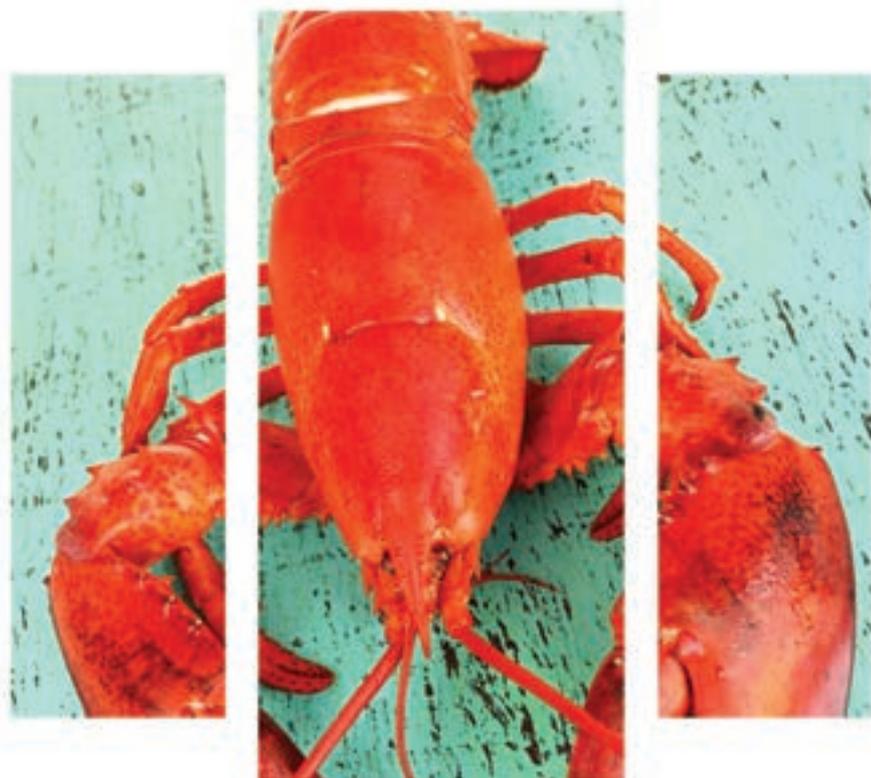
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Assorted Bread Display

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Ginger Squash Soup with Crème Fraîche

CARVERY

Fresh Oven Roasted Tom Turkey with Giblet Gravy
Cranberry and Tangerine Compote
Clove Studded Smithfield Ham with Brown Sugar-Maple Glaze
Roast Prime Rib of Beef with Horseradish Mouselline
Salmon with Tomato and Dilled Doria Sauce Garnished with Salmon Caviar

ACCOMPANIMENTS

Seven Grain Wild Rice Blend with Forest Mushrooms
Freshly Whipped Idaho Potatoes with Turnips
Green and Wax Beans with Caramelized Pearl Onions, Apple Cured Bacon and Walnuts
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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. \$\$

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

Some things never change, or so it seems at this classic diner. Open since 1938, people still line up on Saturday mornings, waiting for a seat at the counter and enormous breakfasts: corned beef hash or crab cakes and eggs with grits; fluffy pancakes; home-made biscuits with gravy and Georgia sausage – everything from oatmeal to eggs Benedict. The lunch menu is a roll call of the usual suspects, but most regulars ignore the menu and go for the daily blackboard specials. \$\$-\$\$

Shikany
251 NW 25th St., 305-573-0690

This stylishly converted warehouse is currently Miami's most cutting-edge fine-dining venue. On Michael Shikany's ever-changing Xtreme menus, expect complexity and molecular magic: *vichyssoise* as potted plant with dehydrated pumpernickel "soil"; a dessert featuring red beet sponge and yellow beet pop rocks. Shikany does manage to have confounding culinary elements make sense. But doubters can break in gently with softshell crab arepas, maple syrup-braised boar cheeks with a DIY (Drizzle It Yourself) tube of lemon/thyme *crème*, even refreshingly original lobster mac 'n' cheese. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 offshoot 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. \$\$-\$\$\$

SuViche
2751 N. Miami Ave., 305-960-7097

As its fusion name suggests, this artsy indoor/outdoor eatery doesn't merely serve a mix of Japanese sushi and Latin ceviches but a true fusion of both, largely owing to signature sauces (many based on Peru's citrusy/creamy *acevichado* emulsion with Japanese spicing) that are applied to sushi rolls and ceviche bowls alike. Additionally there are some popular Peruvian-fusion cooked dishes like *Chifa* (Peruvian-Chinese) *lomo saltado*, served traditionally, as an entrée, or creatively in springs rolls). To add to the fun, accompany your meal with a cocktail from Miami's only pisco bar. \$\$-\$\$\$

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. \$\$-\$\$\$

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 scallion, 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 churros 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 Café
450 NW 27th St., 305-576-1105

Located inside the Wynwood Warehouse Project, an art gallery/workshop/consulting space, this alt-culture eatery is sort of a starvation-budget, working-artists' version of the Pérez Art Museum Miami's high-end café, *Verde*: light-bite focused, but with unbelievably low prices. Specialty is "The \$3 Sandwich," choice of quality coldcut (pastrami, salami, turkey, or ham) plus provolone, spinach, tomato, and Dijon mustard sauce. A \$5 "Monster" features three meats. Also notably tasty and cheap are coffees, desserts, and fresh-fruit smoothies (including a take on NYC's classic *Orange Julius*). \$

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*): *gaspacho* or black bean soups; shredded chicken *ropa vieja* empanadas with *clantrro crema*; grilled octopus skewers with *tapenade*; plus fingerling potato-chorizo hash and other seasonal farm-to-table veg dishes. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Zak the Baker
405 NW 26th St., 786-280-0327

This part-rustic/part industrial-chic breakfast and lunch spot, located in Zak Stern's bakery, is one certified-Kosher café where neither religious dietary laws nor culinary standards are compromised. Reason: The menu of open-face sandwich "toasts," soups, salads, and small plates doesn't overreach, but stays centered on Zak's substantial and superbly crusty organic sourdough loaves, arguably the best bread in Miami. Varieties range from classic Jewish *deli rye* to exotic olive & za'atar or All American cranberry/walnut. Toast toppings, sweet or savory, are mainly local vegetable and dairy combos, so non-carnivores, as well as diners keeping Kosher, luck out. \$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

BarMeli
725 NE 79th St., 305-754-5558

Just east of Liza Meli's defunct *Ouzo's Taverna*, her similarly rustic-festive tapas and wine bar/market has an extensive, mostly small-plates menu including all of *Ouzo's* Greatest Greek Hits (refreshingly light and lemony *taramosalata* carp roe spread, amazingly succulent grilled fresh sardines, her mom's lemon cake, more), plus more broadly Mediterranean creations like an Italian-inspired *grana padano* flan, uniquely topped *crostini* and flatbreads, cheese/charcuterie boards. The boutique wine selection focuses on unusual (sometimes virtually unknown, and unavailable elsewhere in town) Mediterranean varietals from family-owned vineyards. \$\$

Big Fish
620 NE 78th St., 305-373-1770

Longtime locals who remember the uniquely Miamian ambiance of the first *Big Fish*, a beloved Miami River hole-in-the-wall restolounge, will want to visit this rebirth featuring an equally cool waterside setting on the Little River, plus an original owner and similar traditional Italian dishes. Our personal fave is spaghetti alla *vongole veraci* (with tiny true Venetian clams, hard to find today even in Venice), but you'll know what you like on the familiar menu. Best seating: the expansive extensively (and expensively) rebuilt riverfront deck. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 *mazeno* 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. \$\$

Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

B & M Market 219 NE 79th St., 305-757-2889

Don't let the rustic look of this mom-and-pop Caribbean market/eatery, or its ungentrified location, scare you. Walk to the kitchen in the back of the market, order, and then either eat-in (at two tables) or take-out some of Miami's tastiest, and cheapest, West Indian food. Celeb chef Michelle Bernstein is a longtime fan of the jerk chicken, ackee and saltfish, and pigeon peas and rice cooked in coconut milk. Rotis rule here; the flatbreads come plain or, better yet, in curry chicken, goat, or remarkably full-flavored vegetarian versions. \$

Choices Vegan Café 646 NE 79th St., 786-803-8352

Vegan fare (not just vegetarian, but dairy-free) can be a hard sell. But not Choices' 100% plant-based breakfast/lunch/dinner dishes, even though, being also 95% organic, they're relatively pricey. Especially recommended: hefty wraps (enclosed in varied grain tortillas or, more uniquely, in collard leaves), featuring a variety of flavorful mock-meat patties plus fresh veggies, enhanced with globally inspired sauces and add-ons like savory soy chorizo. Desserts like raw chocolate mousse cake taste satisfyingly sinful. To drink: smoothies, or go wild with organic beers and wines. \$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

Florito 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 locro, but here a refined, creamy soup. Many more surprises – even steaks. \$\$\$

Flavorish Market 7283 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-8787

As Zabar's reflects Manhattan's Upper Westside neighborhood, this smaller specialty foods shop is geared toward Miami's Upper Eastside lifestyle. The carefully curated stock ranges widely: upscale packaged foods; boutique wines/beers; artisanal cheeses and cured meats; cookbooks, kitchen utensils, more. But highlights are locally produced fare: Mimi's famed raviolis; Roc Kat's tropical ice creams; chef/restaurateur Ken Lyon's prepared foods, including daily-changing dinners for two; Zak the Baker's crusty sourdough breads, plus sandwiches on same. Best-kept secret: While there's no official café component, comfie counter seats enable on-premises breakfasting, lunching, and coffee/pastry breaks. \$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

La Tour Eiffel 7281 Biscayne Blvd., 305-754-0014

This cute restaurant/crêperie serves three meals, from traditional French breakfasts of croissants/baguettes and jam, or heftier ones including pain perdu (real French toast), to dinners featuring a chef's special \$28.90 two-course meal of classics: country pâté, Provençal fish soup, bold boeuf bourgignon, creamy-rich poulet à la Normande, a moules/frites that even comes with a glass of muscadet, and many more starter/entrée choices. But definitely don't miss the crêpes, served all day in both sweet and savory varieties – the latter made correctly, for a change, with heftier buckwheat flour. \$\$\$

Loba 7420 Biscayne Blvd., 786-536-6692

As suggested by this comfie gastropub's interactive literary ambience (décor features shelves of paperbacks), the concept of young financial-analyst-turned-restaurateur Jessica Sanchez is to encourage creativity, including exploring Miami's unique culture-agriculture through food created by a staff including experienced chefs, FIU culinary students, and her mom Libia, former owner of the traditional Colombian Patacón chain. Needless to say, the menu is eclectic, ranging from South American (the Patacón, a bandeja paisa-inspired sampler plate) to modernized Old South (MiMo Fried Chicken with crispy kale and local honey). Boredom? Impossible. \$\$\$

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 ambience, 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. \$\$\$

MiMo Art Café 592 NE 77th St., 305-765-7733

Appropriately, since this new coffee shop is tiny – not even very visible from the street on a drive-by – it focuses on one signature specialty: croissants. You'll find them in every form co-owner/front-of-the-house honcho Houria Beckner and chef Javier Oitana can dream up to use them. Croissantwiches range from simple hot dogs to the elaborate pantesca (a prosciutto di Parma/mixed olive/tomato/sautéed onion/mozzarella melt) to weirder creations like the Alfredo (topped with the creamy Roman pasta sauce plus mushrooms). And breakfast is served just when one wants it: all day. \$

Mina's Mediterraneo 749 NE 79th St., 786-391-0300

Unlike most restaurants labeled "Mediterranean," this one, decorated with restrained modern elegance, really does have dishes from countries surrounding all sides of the sea (though not necessarily from the countries' seaside regions, as boeuf Bourguignon attests). Our favorites, like owner Yasmine Kotb, whose heritage is Egyptian-via-Texas, and her mom, the chef, are those featuring exotic Eastern/North African tastes – with twists. Especially fun: Egypt's besara, a light fava-based hummus; falafel "sliders" in warm pita with Israeli salad, slaw, and tahini; and an unusual side of grilled kale with yogurt dressing and hazelnuts. \$\$

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. \$\$\$

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

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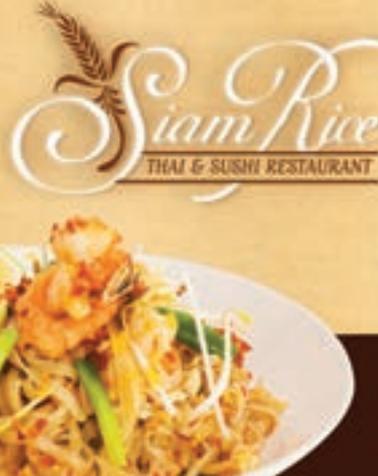
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Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

food menu ranges from fun small plates (deviled eggs with smoked salmon and dill, crisp-fried focchio pockets with gorgonzola sauce, oysters Rockefeller) to heartier items like burgers and steak au poivre. And don't miss the sticky date/toffee pudding. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Tap 79 1071 NE 79th St., 305-381-0946

One-time fine-dining chef Alfredo Patino, whose still thriving wine/tapas bar Bin No. 18 was one of the first chef-owned restaurants to bring casual culinary sophistication to the downtown/midtown Biscayne Corridor, does the same for still-transitional 79th Street with this convivial gastropub, which has a similar sharable-plates menu, but built more around beer than wine pairings. Highlights range from carefully curated, imported charcuterie/cheese plates to fun chef-driven items: house-cured beef jerky, brown sugar/ginger-marinated salmon "Scooby Snacks," hearty Coke-braised short ribs with sweet corn polenta and pungent Maytag blue cheese. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Taperia Raca 7010 Biscayne Blvd., 786-751-8756

From the chef/GM team behind Giorgio Rapicavoli's rebelliously eclectic fare at Coral Gables' Eating House, Taperia has a very different concept: traditional Spanish tapas with subtle creative twists... that make a big difference. Transformations come from both Rapicavoli and chef de cuisine Ryan Harrison (mastermind behind the defunct Preservation, where the focus was house-curing/pickling/smoking): classic <patatas bravas>, spicy fried potatoes made more complex by smoked tomato sauce; original patatas contentas, calmed by Eating House's truffle-enriched carbonara sauce. And homemade preserves accent many dishes, including seductive chicken-liver mousse. \$\$\$

Via Verdi Cucina Rustica 6900 Biscayne Blvd., 786-615-2870

After years of critical acclaim cooking the cuisine of their native Piedmont at ultra-upscale Quattro, on Lincoln Road, twin brother chefs Nicola and Fabrizio Carro decided to work for themselves, hands-on renovating the former space of MiMo District pioneer Uva 69. Cuisine here is similarly authentic, with creative twists. But there are important differences: emphasis on local, rather than mostly imported, ingredients; inspiration from all Italian regions; and best, astonishing affordability. Housemade spinach/ricotta gnudi baked in an ocean of burrata is a delight, but it's hard to go wrong here. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

NORTH BAY VILLAGE

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Paprika 1624 NE 79th St., 305-397-877

This exotically decorated restaurant, serving Mediterranean cuisine from North Africa and the Middle East, has several unusual features, including Friday-night belly dancing and a hookah lounge. Food menus also feature appealing, unusual choices (za'atar-spiced seared lamb loin carpaccio with chickpea purée; stuffed boureka puff pastries; mussels in creamy saffron sauce) along with familiar hummus, kabobs, more. Lunchtime sandwich standout: merguez (intensely spiced lamb sausage) with tzatziki, hummus, salad, and fiery harissa sauce, on fresh pita. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 focchio 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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 Longsomboon (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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

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. \$\$

NORTH MIAMI

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 à 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 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 homemade sweets (including mouthwateringly buttery croissants) complete the menu. \$\$\$

Captain Jim's Seafood 12950 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-892-1812

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. \$\$

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 achiote, 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Fish Fish 13488 Biscayne Blvd., 786-732-3124

Here's what makes this elegantly warm restorlounge 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 scorcher. 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. \$\$

Great Harvest Bread Company 1817 NE 123rd St., 305-899-9988

At its heart this establishment is a bakery, where owner Claude Juneau crafts a regularly rotating selection of whole-grain loaves freshly baked each day (from grains also milled daily to maintain nutritional benefits) that are good for you – and just plain good. Junk-food junkies who may doubt need only try our flavorful faves, cheddar garlic, Mediterranean olive, old-fashioned white. Tip: Breads taste best enclosing combinations like rare roast beef with chimichurri or chicken salad with sweet/spicy pecans, in the bakery's café, which also serves fresh-baked sweets – cookies, muffins, much more. \$\$

Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

Jefe's Soul Shack 12581 Biscayne Blvd., 305-989-5811

This first brick-and-mortar location of wildly popular Jefe's Original Fish Taco & Burger food truck serves all the same authentic soft corn tortilla-wrapped tacos – including Ensenada-style fish (crisp-battered with shaved cabbage, pico de gallo, and housemade Mexican crema; no Tex/Mex-type cheese, etc.) – that many aficionados feel are Miami's best and most budget-friendly street food. Also the same: lettuce/tomato/pickle/secret sauce-garnished burgers, available "Miami-style" (with extra everything, plus succulent griddled onions), and fried caper-sprinkled fries. New items include ingeniously topped Mexican-fusion burgers, and several elaborate salads. \$-\$\$

KC Healthy Cooking 11900 Biscayne Blvd. #103, 786-502-4193

Hidden inside an office building across from Home Depot, this family-friendly spot has no fancy features – such as a sign outside. But walk through the corporate lobby and you'll find truly heartfelt, health-conscious, homemade dishes, some surprisingly sophisticated. There's no red meat on the globally influenced menu, but there are poultry and fish, along with many vegetarian or vegan choices: organic pumpkin soup, zingy Thai curried veggie soup, an elegantly layered, molded tuna/avocado/quinoa "cupcake," a real Bundt cake – vegan (no dairy) but remarkably tasty. \$\$

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. \$\$\$

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 a mountain of mushrooms, and other Italian-American belly-busters. All pasta or meat entrees come with oil-drenched garlic rolls and either soup (hearty minestrone) or a salad (mixed greens, tomatoes, cukes, 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 Rissone'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 pizzaolo. 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. \$-\$\$

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. \$

Tunky Tunky 11052 Biscayne Blvd., 786-953-5825

In the long-vacant space formerly occupied by Biscayne Boulevard fine-dining pioneer North 110, Juan Carlos Collazos and his sister/chef Elvira now keep the street cool with a newer Miami craze, Peruvian food. You'll find the expected mix of marinated raw seafood or fish ceviches/tiraditos and cooked favorites, including Chifa (Chinese-Peruvian fusion) lomo salteado, plus a few surprises: rediscovered ancient Andean Indian stews like carapulcra de cerdo (pork and dried potato soup); original inventions like tiraditos sauced with pisco or olive cream; a karaoke bar. \$\$\$

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. \$

Chef Rolf's Tuna's Seafood Restaurant 17850 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-932-0630

Known for decades as simply Tuna's, this indoor/outdoor eatery, combining a casual vibe with some surprisingly sophisticated food, now has a name recognizing the culinary refinements introduced by Rolf Fellhauer, for 28 years executive chef at Continental fine-dining spot La Paloma. Additions to the predominantly seafood menu include chateaubriand or rack of lamb for two, both carved, with old-school spectacle, table-side. Owner Michael Choido has also renovated the interior dining room, and added the Yellowfin Lounge, which features an extensive selection of artisan beers. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

El'eat Restaurant & Lounge 3207 NE 163rd St., 786-440-7104

In an amusingly 1970s-retro/glam space, festooned with chandeliers, chef Will Biscoe crafts unpretentiously upgraded multicultural comfort foods: tarte flamande, an Alsatian flatbread topped with crème fraîche, onions, and sophisticated speck instead of traditional salt pork-like lardons; avocado "fritters" (panko-breaded wedges flash-fried crispy) with spicy mayo-based Japanese "dynamite" sauce plus, to balance the richness, pickled carrots/daikon (the crunchy condiment everyone adores on Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches). Or have a steak, with New/Old World sauces. For dessert, Biscoe's homemade chocolate chip cookies, upscaled with Valrhona chocolate, are people-pleasers. \$\$\$

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). \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$

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, Bangladesh'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. \$-\$\$\$

King Palace 330 NE 167th St., 305-949-2339

Specialties here are authentic Chinatown-style BBQ (whole ducks, roast pork strips, etc., 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, like delicate sautéed pea shoots. 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. Servers will also steer you to the good stuff, once you convince them you're not a chop suey kinda person. \$\$

Kings County Pizza 18228 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-792-9455

If your feelings about Brooklyn-style pizza have been formed by Domino's flopsy-crusts, ketchup, cheese-foody 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. \$-\$\$

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. \$\$\$

Lime Fresh Mexican Grill 14831 Biscayne Blvd., 305-949-8800 www.limefreshmexicangrill.com

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. \$

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 not just a soup but a whole ceremony), and many other Vietnamese classics. The menu is humongous. \$\$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$



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Dining Guide: RESTAURANTS

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Rizio's Peruvian Cuisine 15975 Biscayne Blvd., 305-945-5111

Peruvian eateries featuring ceviches and classic cooked dishes are plentiful in Miami; those adding "NovoAndean" fine-dining fare to the mix? Not so much. Since 2000, evolutionary chefs in Peru have been using sophisticated European techniques to revive humble native Andean ingredients like quinoa. Since late 2012, this secret spot has been, too, thanks to former Lima restaurateur Cesar Valverde, a traditionalist, and his chef son Mauricio, a Miami Culinary Institute-trained innovator. Even traditional tiraditos have delightful elegance. But don't neglect Novo inventions like "trigotos," risottos substituting trigo (wheat) for rice. \$\$\$

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. \$\$\$

Soprano Café 3933 NE 163rd St., 855-434-9035

Sicilian native Rocco Soprano, original proprietor of South Beach's Soprano's, has transformed this Intracoastal Waterway space, formerly the enoteca Rack's, into an elegant but family-friendly restaurant featuring classic Italian dishes plus steakhouse fare, all in prodigious portions. For an ultimate Miamian/Italian fusion experience, arrive by boat at Soprano's dock, grab a table on the water-view deck, and enjoy a coal-oven pizza – perhaps the famous truffled white pizza, or our personal fave secchi: sopressata salami, zesty tomato sauce, provolone, goat cheese, and fresh fior di latte mozzarella. \$\$\$

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. \$\$

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 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 yung 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

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. \$\$\$

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 shortribs 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 stone – 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. \$\$

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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Buffalo Wild Wings 18721 Biscayne Blvd., 305-962-9995

Like all locations of this renowned national sports bar/grill chain – originated in 1982, when two fans of Buffalo-style chicken

wings couldn't find any in Ohio – Ventura's "B-Dubs" features an astonishing array of HD TVs (64), beers, and, naturally, wings: almost two dozen sauce and dry-rub choices, from a chili-spiced buttery original flavor to Asian, Caribbean, Italian, and beyond. Additionally, there's a full menu of burgers, salads, flatbreads, and other All-American classics. An outdoor patio and WiFi tablets loaded with games contribute considerably to kid-friendliness. \$\$

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 relaxingly 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. \$

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 pricey 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 poseurs. 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 sueys 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

Named after Ernest Hemingway's fishing boat, this eatery, helmed for its first decade by chef Scott Fredel, is now under new ownership. The menu is a mix of classic dishes (grilled skirt steak with chimichurri and fries; chicken parm), today's trendy favorites (sliders, tuna tartare), and pastas including linguine with shrimp, tomato, basil, and garlic in Alfredo sauce. But executive chef Frank Ferreiro's focus remains fresh seafood, like pan-seared colossal scallops with sautéed spinach, fried onions, roasted corn, and champagne butter sauce. \$\$\$

SUNNY ISLES BEACH

AQ by Acqualina 17875 Collins Ave., 305-918-8000

Many resort restaurants play it safe with middle-of-the-road food, but Acqualina has obviously given longtime local favorite chef Dewey LoSasso free reign. To best experience his culinary creativity and wit, make a meal of small plates like "Green Eggs and Ham" (baked eggs with chives, luxuriant Iberico ham, and mascarpone); crab buns

with Chinese mustard sauce; a "Grouper and Greens" chopped salad (grouper cheeks and escarole, plus some playful molecular magic: avocado oil powder and pistachio dust). Bonus: a surprise sushi bar operated by popular Japanese eatery Yakko-san. \$\$\$

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 Gnudi 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?) Almost-sage butter-sauced butternut squash gnudi is a best bet. And meals end with another best bet: the "Viny D Split," a game enabling tables to win their meals for free. \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Basil Park 17608 Collins Ave., 305-705-0004

From Tim Andriola, of longtime Italian food favorite Timo next door, this more casual, globally inspired breakfast/lunch/dinner spot focuses on chef-driven healthy (though not meat-free, nor entirely organic), eco-conscious eating that's as good-tasting as it is good for you. Really. Even we in the BT food department, who consider "deep-fried" a basic food group, find Andriola's lightly salted garlic and cayenne-spiced crispy kale chips, dehydrated rather than fried, surprisingly satisfying. Other highlights: spicy salmon handrolls (with quinoa replacing sushi rice); deceptively decadent-tasting raw chocolate/almond pâté with berry sorbet. \$\$\$

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 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. \$\$\$

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 ravioli 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. \$\$\$

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, cannellini 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. \$\$\$-\$\$\$-\$\$\$



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while supplies last \$1.99 each

For Store orders:

laurenzos1951@aol.com

16385 W. Dixie Hwy, NMB • 305-945-6381

look for our weekly ad online at

www.laurenzosmarket.com

OPEN 7 DAYS:

Mon-Sat 9am - 7pm,

Sunday 9am - 5pm

Laurenzo's Farmers Market

16445 W. Dixie Hwy
305-944-5052

OPEN 7 DAYS: 7am - 6pm, Sunday: 8am - 5pm (yes, we have fresh herbs & fresh juice!)

SEE OUR WEEKLY AD ONLINE

AVAILABLE FOR YOUR HOLIDAY NEEDS! CALL FOR AVAILABILITY WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!

Jumbo Artichokes, Stuffing Mushrooms, Italian Chestnuts, Italian Eggplant, Assorted Eggplant, Escarole, Broccoli Rabe, Romaine Hearts

A Selection of Organic Produce, Including~ Fuji Apples, D'Anjou Pears, Apples and Citrus

FOR SALE!



**LITTLE RIVER: 421 NE 61 ST
FOR SALE | \$1.7 M**

New construction. Over 7000 SF of warehouse with 500 SF of office. Clean work room with mezzanine. Gated parking. This warehouse is on a great corner. Building has impact windows and doors.

**IRENE DAKOTA | 305 972 8860
idakota@metro1.com**

FOR SALE!



**DOWNTOWN: 888 BISCAYNE BLVD, UNIT #505
FOR SALE | \$4.5 M**

8,000 SF exceptional bi-level office condominium located in the 5th and 6th floor of the Marina Blue mixed-use building. Bay views from both floors.

**FLAVIA TALLO | 305 571 9991
info@metro1.com**

JUST SOLD!



**BUENA VISTA EAST: 122 NE 47 STREET
JUST SOLD! | \$1.1 M**

FIRST MILLION DOLLAR SALE!

Sold in Design District!
Spectacular renovated Estate.

Call me for great off market opportunities!

- Retail store w/house & land.
- 1925 3/2 restored beauty.

**JANE RUSSELL | 305 799 7436
jrussell@metro1.com**

Want The Design District??



JUST LISTED!



**UPPER EASTSIDE: 5941 BISCAYNE BLVD
FOR SALE | JUST LISTED! | \$1,290,000**

12,180 SF lot. Prime Upper Eastside / MiMo development lot. Approved plans for an owner user / investor commercial office building, are included with the property.

**PETER ANDOLINA | 305 571 9991
info@metro1.com**

FOR SALE!



**LITTLE RIVER: 335-337-339 NE 61 ST
FOR SALE | \$1,650,000 - \$1,700,000**

3 new construction warehouses including: two story 1,638 SF office, 24 FT ceiling, gated parking, three phase power, impact glass, 6,518 SF of warehouse space. Designed so a container truck can drive straight through.

**IRENE DAKOTA | 305 972 8860
idakota@metro1properties.com**

FOR SALE!



**PALM GROVE: 551 NE 69 STREET
FOR SALE | \$295,000**

Historic 1938 home in the trendy Palm Grove neighborhood, just west of Biscayne Blvd. 2 bdrm/1 bath plus small attached efficiency. Rustic, super-charming country house with wood floors & fireplace. Gated entry & fenced yard with fruit trees & butterfly garden. Walking distance to Starbucks, Vagabond, Yoga Studios, and more.

**MARCY KAPLAN & LORI BRANDT | 786 543 5755
gimmeshelter@metro1.com**

FOR SALE!



**BAYSIDE: HISTORIC BAYSIDE GEM
FOR SALE | \$525,000**

OFF-MARKET historic 1930's home in great location, just steps to the bay! 3 bdrm/ 3 bath with high vaulted ceiling in living room, fireplace, wood floors, screened porch, and private fenced yard. New roof, central A/C, and a full house generator. Call us about listed and off-market opportunities.

**MARCY KAPLAN & LORI BRANDT | 786 543 5755
gimmeshelter@metro1.com**

FOR LEASE



**UPPER EASTSIDE: 875 NE 79 ST
FOR LEASE | \$30 PSF**

Ready to move in two floor office building with abundant vegetation and a gated parking lot of its own. 2,820 total SF available. Within steps of Choices Cafe, Guarapo, Via Verdi and many other lunch spots.

**TONY ARELLANO | 305 571 9991
info@metro1.com**

AVAILABLE!



**BISCAYNE CORRIDOR: 471 NE 79TH STREET
AVAILABLE | \$4,500,000**

Great opportunity to own two separate folios and structures. 471 NE 79th ST (16,901 SF) and 8100 NE 4th Place (2,871 SF) are being sold together for one great price. Endless possibilities for use or knock down and build new.

**JENNY ARIAS MAY / HAROLD GREENBLATT
305 571 9991 | jmay@metro1.com**

FOR LEASE



**FILLING STATION LOFTS: 1657 N MIAMI AVE
FOR LEASE | CALL FOR AVAILABILITY**

ASK US ABOUT OUR NOVEMBER RESIDENT INCENTIVES.

The Filling Station Lofts feature modern design, gorgeous views of the Miami Skyline, 18 FT ceilings, open format, huge interior windows, exposed concrete and limestone, wood finishing, stainless steel, indoor parking, downstairs retail. Minutes from Brickell, Downtown, Downtown, and Miami Beach.

**CESAR DELAFLOR | 305 571 9991
info@metro1.com**

**FILLING
STATION
LOFTS**