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Gettin' in on the Action

by Julie Barker



From professional meeting planners to restaurateur Emeril Lagasse, everyone's getting the hots for Miami.

MIAMI, A CITY ON THE EDGE OF A continent, on the brim of paradisaical waters, is perfectly situated for work and play. No wonder it keeps shedding its skin and turning ever more glamorous. Sophisticated and impatient, it attracts the most beautiful people—and hotel developers follow, naturally. One recent and notable debut: the 203-room Conrad Miami downtown. Rosewood Hotels plans an October 2005 debut for Acqualina in South Beach, and Regent has a 17-story hotel in development in Bal Harbour, for a late 2006 opening. Those are just a few of the names in a glittering list.

What keeps the city's heart pumping are visitors and meetings. And the reverse is true as well. With a list of draws like beaches; deep-sea fishing; Art Deco tours; ballet; theater; museums; an international art scene; hip clubs; celebrity chefs; professional sports teams; and miles of outdoor function space: What more could a

planner want, except the time to put together a fantastic itinerary?

That's what Kristin Laffey, assistant vice president, Citigroup conference and event planning did when she arranged a 600-person incentive trip last November. She chose the 790-room Loews Miami Beach as the group's host hotel, taking advantage of the property's old-time glamour (the hotel incorporates the vintage Art Deco St. Moritz hotel) and modern tingle of fun (in the form of Emeril Lagasse's newest restaurant, for example). And she used Miami's water wonderland as the springboard for one great time.

make a splash

A poolside opening reception set the stage for a "very Floridian" program, says Laffey. Incentive winners enjoyed a raw bar, crab legs, oysters on the half shell, a hot seafood station, and a carving station. Desserts included key lime pie. The idea, says Laffey, was to let

people sink right into the atmosphere and "enjoy some of the things that Miami reminds you of." Icy Mojitos, the Cuban rum-and-mint drink that's ubiquitous in Miami, were flowing, while a Jimmy Buffett-type band played group favorites—all of which "put everyone on a good foot" for the rest of the program, says Laffey.

Of course, it's almost impossible not to be on a good foot in Miami, when right outside the hotel door are the beautiful beaches, colorful sites, and trendy scenes that make Miami one of the most happening cities in the country. Laffey's group took advantage of relaxing afternoons at the beach, a city tour of historic Miami, and a spin around South Beach by bike. The planner really made a splash when she invited attendees to unfurl their sails for a regatta and deep-sea fishing excursions. The group even took over one of Miami's hot dance clubs for a night on the town.



meet me in miami

Such activities are a natural in this city. In fact, Miami was practically built for fun. But when it comes to serious meetings, does the allure and excitement become a distraction? According to most planners, it doesn't have to—especially if downtime is strategically scheduled into the agenda.

Julie Taylor, senior manager of meetings and exhibits for the American Association for Cancer Research, based in Philadelphia, held a particularly intense meeting at the 300-room Sonesta Key Biscayne in October 2004 for 270 researchers from Europe and the United States. Taylor offered no off-property events, but researchers were given free time in the afternoons to explore the city on their own. A final night party gave the program the finishing Miami touch that sealed the

event, without a lot of fancy footwork on Taylor's part.

"We didn't need to do anything [as far as theming]," says Taylor, who arranged for a deejay, and huddled with Sonesta's chef to select the beach barbecue buffet. "It had a particularly Miami feel because of the location and the food," says Taylor.

David Wiggins, Greenville, South Carolina-based Marketing Communications Leader—Americas, for Victrex, a manufacturer of high-performance polymers headquartered in the U.K., took a slightly different approach when he took 25 U.S.-based sales and marketing people to the 151-room National Hotel in South Beach early in December 2004. His program consisted of a three-day meeting followed by two days of pure relaxation, joined by spouses and guests.

Victrex's meetings were held in the "very bright, high-ceilinged Oval Room that was Old World [in style] but very modern at the same time," says Wiggins. "The doors opened onto a patio, and that's where we did all our breaks and luncheons. We could see the outdoors but there were no distractions in the view—like tennis courts or a pool."

Even on meeting days, however, Wiggins included a good mix of downtime in the agenda, mostly centered on South Beach. One group "escape" was an Everglades trip. There were many sightings of turtles and alligators during the 35-minute airboat ride. Back at the base, a ranger introduced group members to the thrill of holding baby gators.

The group dined out most evenings. The final night began with a private cocktail hour on the Spire deck at the very trendy The Hotel, whose restaurant, Wish, sat them outdoors for dinner from a set menu. Wiggins describes the attentiveness of the manager, and the quality of the experience, as "phenomenal."

conventioning in style

While the majority of Miami's groups are mid-size corporate and association meetings, the city is equipped to host up to 30,000 attendees citywide. The Miami Beach Convention Center, located in the heart of South Beach, has 650,000 square feet of function space that can be divided and used by four

expanding access

Miami International Airport (MIA), ranked third-busiest in the country, is in the midst of a major expansion and improvement project. A fourth runway opened in 2003. Because that project was completed in record speed, increasing capacity by 25 percent and reducing operational delays, signs are good for finishing other work on schedule. The terminals are now being expanded to add 130 gates and new federal inspection areas. There's also to be a rooftop people mover. The master plan shows phases of this work continuing through 2007. Ground transportation components will take the schedule another two or three years beyond that.



groups simultaneously. Such flexibility means it often hosts a public show and a trade show at the same time, as it did for several days in January, when 57,500-net-square-foot The Special Event and 48,000-net-square-foot Art Miami each took part of the facility. Right next door is the 2,700-seat Jackie Gleason Theatre of the Performing Arts. It offers groups tiered seating and concert-quality acoustics.

For a citywide having 15,000 rooms or more, the Greater Miami CVB rolls out red carpet service: welcome banners around the convention center, complimentary concierge desks stationed at the convention center, and registration services. "We have a very active staff of about 200 people who speak over 15 languages," says Ita Moriarty, senior vice president of convention sales. "They serve as ambassadors who will be available either at the hotels or the convention center."

Just as restaurants, clubs, and fashionable hotels are on the rise in Miami, so is the dedicated meetings product. Voters passed a bond measure last November, and plans are being drawn up for what will likely be a 50,000-square-foot ballroom for the convention center. This will give it the state-of-the-art features that medical groups and large corporate groups need for general sessions. And producers of large shows or exhibitions in Miami can look forward to more flexible, high-tech spaces like never before. ■

in the know

Even planners taking small groups to Miami needn't feel they have to figure out all of the details on their own to create a one-of-a-kind meeting or incentive experience. The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau can help with ideas, site inspections, and service providers. Anything from 10 rooms and up gets CVB attention, says Ita Moriarty, senior vice president of convention sales. "We're trying to reach out to all customers to make sure they get the services they need."

For more information on your small group meeting, visit www.MiamiMeetingsExpress.com

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Miami Performing Arts Center

center-city culture

"Whatever the topic," says George Neary, director of cultural tourism for the Greater Miami CVB, holding a session in an art museum "makes the meeting a lot more interesting." On a Philip Johnson-designed plaza downtown are two major facilities: the Miami Art Museum, and the Historical Museum of Southern

prideful places

Overtown and Liberty City are two historically African-American communities located in the downtown area. Overtown, dates from 1896, old for Miami; fortunately many of the churches and buildings have been preserved. One gem is the circa-1914 Lyric Theater, where practically every great black performer, from Duke Ellington to Patti LaBelle, has held a concert. Completely renovated, it seats

up to 400 attendees.

South Florida's first black settlement was at the southern end of town, a Bahamian fishing village, where charming Coconut Grove is now. An 1891 wooden plantation house, The Barnacle, gives us a view of old-time Miami before the millionaires came. Southern Florida was barely settled at the time Ralph Moore built the house; Henry Flagler's railroad wasn't built until 1896.

Florida, which specializes in the history of South Florida and the Caribbean. Arrange customized private group tours with the latter museum's resident historian, Dr. George Paul.

Also look into the Olympia/Gusman Theater, where special events have been the rule since 1926. A former vaudeville house, "we call it our atmospheric movie theater—it has twinkling stars and rolling clouds, and 12-foot chandeliers," says Neary. The theater was beautifully restored in 2002; its mosaic arches, statuary, and scenic backdrop are exquisite. There's seating for up to 3,000 people.

Of course, the arts aren't all about history. In late 2005, the city of Miami will

put the finishing touches on the brand-new Miami Performing Arts Center. The center, which comprises two state-of-the-art buildings, spans Biscayne Boulevard with a dramatic pedestrian bridge and will offer expansive event spaces for meeting planners. The Ziff Ballet Opera House will maintain the Carlin Banquet Hall in addition to the 2,400-seat theater, while the 2,200-seat Carnival Symphony Hall will be convertible into an elegant ballroom by covering the ground-floor seating. The 57,000-square-foot Plaza for the Arts will be available for magnificent outdoor events.

To follow the construction of the Miami Performing Arts Center, visit www.miamipac.com.



Bal Harbour

shop it!

Miami is full of great retail opportunities—here's just a sample of what groups can look forward to.

Bal Harbour—Known internationally for its luxury shops and famous clientele, Bal Harbour is an airy 15-acre promenade with designer boutiques and

stores from the likes of Tiffany's, Bulgari, Gucci, Fendi, and Cartier. It doesn't get more posh than this.

Aventura/Sunny Isles—Home to the largest shopping mall in Greater Miami, with more than 250 stores. Aventura is definitely a resort haven and dotted by cool pools, tennis courts, and golf opportunities. Doubletree Ocean Point Resort and Fairmont Turnberry Isle are two spectacular meeting properties here.

Village of Merrick Park—Located in stylish Coral Gables, the Village of Merrick Park offers 115 stores anchored by Nordstrom and Neiman Marcus. The surrounding tropical gardens provide a relaxing setting, while unique restaurants give attendees an insider's taste of Miami.

Lincoln Road—Attendees looking for a quick shopping jaunt from the convention center will find it right here. This collection of local and international boutiques, as well as art galleries, three movie theaters, and many cafe-style restaurants have become quite the entertainment district for meeting-goers.

The Design District—An 18-block area just north of downtown, it is technically a business district catering to Miami's design community. Unlike most cities, though, you don't have to bring a designer with you to get in the door. Or, don't shop—send attendees on a scavenger hunt to get creative ideas on product design.

For more information about great shopping spots in Miami, visit www.ShopMiami.info.



MIAMI

miami golf

It would be a crime to meet in Miami and provide no opportunity for golf. These courses make it easy for groups to get the best the city has to offer:

The Biltmore Hotel—This 280 room property in Coral Gables boasts a lush 18-hole course designed by Donald Ross in 1925. Golf academy and private instruction available.

The Fairmont Turnberry Isle—This 300-acre Mediterranean-style resort in Aventura offers two signature 18-hole courses designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr.

Marriott Doral Golf Resort & Spa—Marriott was brought in to manage this resort in August 2004, and will be investing \$45 million into the property over the next three years. It offers five



The Biltmore Hotel



The Fairmont Turnberry Isle

golf courses, including the Blue Monster Golf Course, which annually hosts the PGA Tour's Ford Championship.

Don Shula's Golf Club—Groups enjoy a country club-style setting at this 84-room property, along with the challenging Senator Course and the par three Executive Course.

Miami Beach Golf Club—A \$12 million renovation has spruced up this public course in a big way. A new relationship

with the Fontainebleau Hilton, just two miles away, allows meeting attendees at that property to take advantage of it.

Crandon Golf Key Biscayne—This championship 18-hole public course is the product of Robert von Hagge and Bruce Devlin. Redesigned by von Hagge in 1993, it features the world's largest tee and gorgeous water views.

For more information on golf courses in Miami, visit www.PlayMiamiGolf.com



Vizcaya, a 16th-century Italian villa

mediterranean mansions

There are numerous examples of Mediterranean Revival architecture, in both Coconut Grove and Coral Gables. The best-known example is Vizcaya, a 16th-century Italian villa built in 1916 by industrialist John Deering. It is a museum today, and a popular location for swanky receptions. Nearby is what GMCVB's George Neary names his favorite locale for a special event: the Venetian Pool in Coral Gables. Originally a rock quarry it was transformed in 1924 into a beautiful tropical swimming hole. It has rock outcroppings, caves, a waterfall, and an island bridged to a casino.

Casa Casuarina, now universally known as the Versace Mansion, has also been transformed into a public events space. The architecture is enhanced with Versace's use of Italian marble and gold leaf; the garden has a mosaic pool, an ideal spot for a function. Capacity is 700 for cocktails. Next door, a new hotel, The Victor, was to open in January, with 91 ultra-luxurious rooms.

For more information on all of Miami's diverse neighborhoods, go to www.MiamiandBeaches.com and search for:

Aventura • Bal Harbour • Coconut Grove • Coral Gables • Downtown Key Biscayne • Miami Beach • South Beach • Sunny Isles • Surfside



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What do Miami hotels
have that other
cities' properties don't?
**Glamour
and swagger.**

Eye-Opening Appeal

WHOLESALE AND NONSTOP, THE newest hotels in Miami reuse the shells of older buildings. Encouraged first by a grassroots citizens' group, the Design Preservation League, and later by ordinance, hotel developers intent on gaining a foothold in one of this hemisphere's most thriving tourist towns are buying up and tweaking the inner beauty of architecturally significant buildings. The result is a whole new facet of Miami design that the Design Preservation League says extends the tradition of the Miami Beach School.

good thinking

Springboarding their own designs from the originals, hotels like the Loews

Miami Beach Hotel (which incorporates the vintage Art Deco St. Maritz Hotel) and the Ritz-Carlton, South Beach (a 2003 restoration of the 1953 DeLido Hotel) have opened to ecstatic reviews. And though the theory has not been proven, exuberant architectural design is not just visually stimulating; it may lead to other avenues of creative thinking.

"You want to challenge pedestrian thinking and you want [your meeting participants] to overcome the tyranny of their own thinking," says Bob Taraschi, founder of Milestone Consulting, an innovation consultancy based in Dedham, Massachusetts. "So the meeting space itself...has to be reflective of that."

Morris Lapidus is responsible for much of the look and feel of Miami's hotel scene. His Miami Modern—also called MiMo—design is evident in the sweeping lines and pastel colors that pervade the city. The Fontainebleau Hilton, Eden Roc, and the Ritz Carlton, South Beach each feature his signature design stamps. The Fontainebleau (now a 1,300-room Hilton) and the Eden Roc (now a 349-room Renaissance Resort) are emblematic not just of MiMo design but of Swinging Sixties sensibilities. The pool at the Fontainebleau was featured in *Goldfinger*, and Sean Connery's sexy, sophisticated, yet tongue-in-cheek persona seems a per-

fect fit for that hotel. The Eden Roc was built two years later, and became a favorite jet-set hangout, drawing those who could be playing anywhere in the world. Lapidus designed the original Eden Roc in 1956, then returned in 1999 to restore his vision of the property, which now features a circular lobby with swooshy, gold-toned sectional seating and fluted oval columns of Brazilian rosewood.

The Fontainebleau is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year and has completed a multimillion-dollar renovation that included completely refurbishing 400 guest rooms and adding a 36-story condominium tower next door to the original Fontainebleau. Luxury condo units in the rental pool can be snapped up by small groups for the ultimate Miami Beach experience.

Two of the hotel's meeting rooms, the Fontaine room and Fleur de Lis, are back-to-back and total 13,500 square feet of pillarless space embellished by hand-blown Venetian glass chandeliers. A Bose sound system and fiberoptic lighting bring the ballrooms elegantly up-to-date.

beyond art deco

Not every cosmopolitan hotel in Miami is indebted to historic design. Many are carving out a new niche for the city.





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Conrad built its first freestanding state-side hotel in downtown Miami last year, but rather than sticking with a traditional Miami “feel,” the company decided instead upon a concave glass-and-steel structure. The property’s 203 guest rooms use a white-on-white palette and pillowy duvets reminiscent of South Beach, but refine the look with a European sensibility.

The Radisson Downtown Miami is another hotel that speaks to the urban set, yet the decor sets a totally different tone than the Conrad. Bold and beautiful, the Radisson employs a vibrant, Latin-inspired color palette, with reds, purples, and golds. It’s 528 guest rooms are a favorite for groups who want to take advantage of downtown’s cultural offerings, and it’s just a few blocks from Miami’s brand-new Performing Arts Center, set to debut later this year (see page 4 for details).

serene scenes

Clearly, many of Miami’s hotels have built a reputation on glitz and glamour. On the flip side of the city’s hotel collection, however, are cocoons of luxury. Take the Mandarin Oriental on Brickell Key. The feel is sophisticated and tranquil; the hotel’s bamboo and hardwood are imported from Asia, and Spanish marble creates a cool escape in guest room baths. Even with the soothing atmosphere, though, the Mandarin is a distinctly cosmopolitan hotel. The 15,000 square feet of meeting space includes several rooms with waterfront views, and glass windows allowing natural light. Wall coverings are silk, chandeliers are made of rice paper, and—be assured—there is state-of-the-art technology.

But if groups are looking for the ultimate in luxury and pampering there’s little need to look much further than Coral Gables. The 276-room Biltmore Hotel Coral Gables, that is, where Mediterranean Revival architecture, Italian marble floors, hand-painted ceilings, and sparkling pools and fountains have been dazzling guests for 79 years.

Incentive groups swath themselves in European feather bedding, fluffy towels, and designer linens, and bask in the opulent surroundings. Meeting attendees find equally amenable treatment, as well as 76,000 square feet of meeting space, including two sumptuously

appointed ballrooms and outdoor terraces, and the Conference Center of the Americas, with two newly constructed amphitheaters.

day into night

With such a hip design scene among Miami’s hotels, it’s easy to see that they can double as great entertainment spots. “When the sun sets, Miami hotels transform from business hubs to nightlife hotspots in the blink of an eye,” says Ellen Marchman, a public relations executive for Loews Hotel Miami Beach. In fact, Loews offers a signature theme party that epitomizes SoBe hipness. Oversized chairs and beds elevated with futon mattresses are brought out to furnish the hotel’s expansive back yard. Instead of tents, the staff sets up four posts with white



fabric over the top, evocative of the tall white curtains that frame the rear doors letting in ocean breezes at this and other chic hotels all along Collins Avenue. The final touch, says Tina Porter, director of national accounts, is to bring out hundreds of glowing votive candles “votives-clear votives all over the back yard.” ■



top miami spas

Peaceful colors, gorgeous views, water as a design element: All these impact the senses, and help spa clients to relax. In a top-notch spa, it’s all about ambiance. Here are the top Miami hotel spas, as selected by *South Beach Magazine* and *Florida Travel*:

Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne—20,000-square-foot facility with West Indies colonial decor and floor-to-ceiling views of the bay.

Mandarin Oriental—A tri-level haven that offers treatments from the East and West, and features six private suites with windows overlooking the bay.

Eden Roc—Celebrities like George Clooney and Jennifer Lopez have been spotted in the Spa of Eden, according to *South Beach Magazine*, whose reviewer raves about the hot stone massage.

Fontainebleau Hilton—The “old” spa made *South Beach’s* top 10 list, but a new 15,000-square-foot, world-class spa is scheduled to open late this year. We can only imagine the pampering.

Fairmont Turnberry Isle—The Willow Stream treatments incorporate Floridian rhythms, and the decor complements these. But the ultimate treatment is from far away: the Balinese Royal Javanese Lulur (flower petals in the bath, yogurt-based exfoliating scrub, and then a massage using frangipani and jasmine oils).

For more information about additional hotels with fabulous spas, visit www.MiamiMeetings.com



The Art of the Table



What's being nibbled
at catered
affairs in this
food-conscious city?
Read on...

THE *SOUTH BEACH DIET* HAS SOLD five million copies, but don't get the wrong idea: In Miami catering kitchens, food is regarded as something to celebrate with and to enjoy, and groups can still indulge. "Comfort food is still a big item for our clients," says Tina Portner, director of national accounts at the Loews Miami Beach hotel. "People are going for those hearty, great meals, especially for dinner."

Hearty meals can still comprise healthy choices, however; and if there's one hotel chef in Miami who truly executes this, it's Loews Executive Chef Marc Ehrler. Ehrler created recipes for *The South Beach Diet Cookbook* and believes in sensible eating. "The freshness of the product, the olive oil, the herbs, the elements of nature," he says, are central in his cooking. He stays away

from processed foods and so-called bad carbs, but it's also important to give attendees choices when it comes to putting together food and beverage events. Miami, of course, makes this easy: Its cultural diversity has brought a huge variety of food trends to the city, and planners can use it to their advantage.

bits and pieces

Ehrler sees a trend to "small dishes—tapas style" and "a lot of stations." On a very small plate, about two inches square or round, might be a seared scallop resting on Peruvian mashed potatoes, over which a chimichurri sauce is drizzled. Chimichurri is Argentine. But its ingredients are similar to those of Mediterranean cooking: olive oil, garlic, lemon, oregano, basil, shallots, and fresh parsley.

Loews groups have also been partial to what Ehrler calls "action stations," which feature a chef behind the table searing meat as guests line up for the freshly cooked food. Ehrler likes to do "cowboy steaks" this way—big beef chops, two and a half inches thick.

To put a little intrigue into an event, build a few dishes around exotic ingredients. Of late, Ehrler's choice has been octopus. "Chilled, diced, and then thin-

sliced. We cure them with Hungarian paprika, olive oil, and herbs. It's like a stir-fry," he says. For Chef Elizabeth Barlow at Sonesta Beach Resort Key Biscayne, dragon fruit is a fresh up-and-comer. "We have a farm here in Homestead that is producing it now. It was on several different chefs' menus this year," she says. "The meat is similar to a kiwi, with white flesh and black seeds, but it has more of a melon taste."

art and artifice

Latin-themed events are a clear favorite in Miami, tapping into the city's sensuous spirit. The culinary range offered by even this single theme can be huge: To some groups it means an elegant ceviche bar, to others it means roasting a pig on a spit—and Miami hotels get it all. "We really try to customize and listen to what the guest requests," says Barlow.

Sometimes this means using a little artistic license to create a "wow" effect. For a pig roast at the hotel's beachside Tiki Village, for example, says Barlow, "we set up the grill. There's an attachment with the rotisserie on it," and the pig actually cooks over the fire for six to eight hours. But, when the guests line up to get a slab of the pork, the pig is still on the spit. "That is part of the show,"



miami spice

Really looking to whet your attendees' appetites? Plan a meeting in Miami in August and experience Miami Spice Restaurant Month, an annual Greater Miami CVB promotion, where more than 60 of the city's finest restaurants dish up value deals. Lunches run \$20.04 and dinners just \$30.04—and each is a three-course extravaganza (appetizer, entree, and dessert) designed by some of Miami's hottest chefs. It's an ideal way to set your attendees free for a truly memorable meal that won't break the bank. Some 2004 participants included: 1200 Courtyard Grill (The Biltmore Hotel), Preston's (Loews Miami Beach Hotel), Azul (The Mandarin Oriental Hotel), Emeril's (Loews Miami Beach Hotel), and Bleau View (Fontainebleau Hilton).

For details on all participating restaurants and more information about Miami Spice Restaurant Month, visit www.MiamiRestaurantMonth.com

she explains. "Although the roasting meat is edible...the one that's being served was actually cooked in the oven."

Miami catering cuisine goes way beyond casual barbecues, though. In a city known for its artistic bent, meeting attendees should never be surprised to find high style on their dinner plates. Take Barton G, somewhat of a living legend in Miami, who caters several

special event facilities in the city. He unabashedly calls his creations "very design driven" and prides himself on taking old culinary tricks and making them new again. For instance, when he serves macaroni and cheese, he mixes it with truffles. Oldies but goodies, such as lobster thermidor, he says, "bring back old memories—bring back the kid in you."

Such "food is art" finds are to be had all over town, and it's easy for planners to incorporate them into events. Raw bars, a group favorite in the city, create a culinary palette out of stone crabs, shrimp, oysters, clams, and other Floridian favorites. Even something as ordinary as mashed potatoes can get the designer treatment when served in martini glasses and topped with colorful tidbits, such as cheddar or leeks.

the stylistics

Food philosophies vary throughout Miami, so planners should shop around. If there's one guiding principle for creating a uniquely Miami menu, however, it would be "have fun!"—and don't be afraid to experiment. Loews' Ehrler says he recently did a six-hour tasting for an upcoming meeting that automaker BMW is planning. And that's not unusual: He and his staff often do 10 or 12 versions of a new dish, shaping it, changing the layering as well as the flavors. "The meeting planner kept apologizing," he says, "but that's what we do all day—chefs like to play with food!" ■



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Greater Miami CVB

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The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau is on hand to help meeting planners make the most of Miami's cosmopolitan facilities and tropical splendor. From start to finish, the GMCVB serves as a liaison between planners and the community to direct groups to resources that will assure a successful convention, meeting, or incentive. Service highlights include:

- Free centralized housing bureau for groups using 500 guest rooms in three or more hotels
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Contact: Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, (800) 933-8448, ext. 3071, Fax: (305) 530-4276, E-mail: MeetingsInfo@MiamiMeetings.com; www.MiamiMeetings.com



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The Biltmore



This National Landmark hotel has just undergone a lobby and guest room renovation—and features a brand-new spa.

Guest Units: 276 guest rooms have been completely updated with brand-new furnishings, high-speed Internet access, and designer linens; suites now offer flat-screen plasma televisions

Meeting Space: 76,000 sf; 30,000 sf of hotel meeting and banquet space for groups up to 1,000, and 40,000 sf of additional space at the Conference Center of the Americas

Dining: 7 restaurants and lounges, including the acclaimed Palme d'Or

Recreation: New 10,000 sf spa features a full array of body and beauty treatments; Donald Ross-designed golf course, the largest hotel pool in the continental U.S., 10 lighted tennis courts

Access: In the heart of Coral Gables, 15 minutes from Miami International Airport

Contact: Ben Mollere, VP Sales, (305) 445-8066, ext. 2022, Fax: (786) 924-0760, E-mail: bmollere@biltmorehotel.com; www.biltmorehotel.com

Circle #74 on Free Information Card

Doubletree Ocean Point Beach Resort & Spa



Spacious suite accommodations and expansive views make for a refreshing group getaway in Sunny Isles Beach.

Guest Units: 152 rooms (112 offer a full kitchen); all include designer linens, Jacuzzi bath, and an oceanview private terrace

Meeting Space: 12,000 sf of meeting space with panoramic ocean views from each meeting room; oceanfront terraces and outdoor function spaces; state-of-the-art technology

Dining: 3 restaurants and lounges; View, the property's signature dining room, The Market is a casual eatery, and Wet Bar serves up cocktails and light fare by the pool

Recreation: Luxury spa with beach- and poolside service; fitness center, private beach, zero-entry pool, 2 outdoor Jacuzzis; tennis and golf nearby

Access: 20 minutes from Miami International Airport

Contact: Harald Bindeus, DOSM, (786) 528-2580, Fax: (305) 940-1658, E-mail: hbindeus@boykin.com; www.doubletree.com

Circle #679 on Free Information Card



Fontainebleau Hilton Resort



A recent \$2 million upgrade to hotel meeting space is attracting groups like never before.

Guest Units: 460 junior, 1- and 2-bedroom suites with marble bathrooms, "Sweet Dreams" beds, high-speed Internet access, and gorgeous views

Meeting Space: 190,000 sf; 45 meeting rooms include a 44,800 sf exhibit hall, 31,250 sf Grand Ballroom, and 21,924 sf Fontainebleau Ballroom

Dining: Bleu View is the resort's signature restaurant, featuring classic American cuisine; also enjoy club Tropigala, Beach Broiler, the 1950s-style LobbyBar, Stephen's, and Coconut Willies

Recreation: Half-acre lagoon pool, "Cookies World" play area, beaches, fitness center; tennis and golf nearby; a brand-new spa is scheduled to debut this year

Access: Miami and Ft. Lauderdale airports are both 35 minutes away

Contact: Steve Silverman, DOS, (305) 535-3255, Fax: (305) 532-8145, E-mail: steve_silverman@hilton.com; www.fontainebleauhilton.com

Circle #157 on Free Information Card

Loews Miami Beach Hotel



In the heart of South Beach and the Art Deco District, this hotel is four blocks from the convention center and close to shopping and entertainment.

Guest Units: 790 newly renovated rooms including 50 suites with bay, city, or ocean views; 100 rooms of Art Deco splendor in the St. Moritz and 690 stylish rooms in the adjacent tower

Meeting Space: 65,000 sf of state-of-the-art space includes the 28,000 sf Americana Ballroom with floor-to-ceiling windows; 13 additional meeting rooms and salons range from 600 to 4,000 sf; expansive indoor/outdoor prefunction space

Dining: 6 restaurants, including Preston's, the hotel's signature restaurant with a New-World flair; Emeril's Miami Beach features "New" New Orleans cuisine

Recreation: Oceanfront pool, nearby championship golf and tennis, watersports, and a complete fitness center; children's programs at SoBe Kids Camp

Access: 20 minutes from Miami International Airport

Contact: Debbie Castillo, Regional Director of Marketing, (305) 604-3903, Fax: (305) 604-3917, E-mail: dcastillo@loewshotels.com; www.loewshotels.com

Circle #314 on Free Information Card

Mandarin Oriental, Miami



Miami's only AAA Five Diamond hotel and restaurant is as pleasing to groups as it is to leisure travelers.

Guest Units: 327 guest rooms and suites; all feature luxurious amenities and spectacular water views

Meeting Space: 15,000 sf of meeting space, including 15 function rooms, many with water views, and an outdoor terrace for special events; Asian-inspired decor and the latest technology; business center; wireless Internet kiosk

Dining: 2 high-energy restaurants, Azul (named "Best Restaurant of the Year" by *Esquire* magazine) and Cafe Sambal with waterfront dining

Recreation: Tri-level spa with 17 treatment rooms, fitness center, infinity-edge swimming pool with cabanas and poolside bar, private beach; tennis and golf nearby

Access: Located on idyllic Brickell Key, Mandarin Oriental, Miami is just 20 minutes from Miami International Airport and 5 minutes from Port of Miami

Contact: Claudia Marulanda, Associate Director of Sales, (385) 913-8350; cmarulanda@mohg.com; www.mandarinoriental.com

Circle #678 on Free Information Card

Radisson Hotel Miami Downtown



Get your group into the sizzle of Miami at this stylish property in the heart of downtown.

Guest Units: 528 rooms and suites feature a bold color palette and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Biscayne Bay or the Miami skyline; club level available

Meeting Space: 43,000 sf in 23 rooms accommodates groups of up to 2,500 attendees; highlights include the 16,684 sf Symphony Ballroom, 8,883 sf Concerto Ballroom, and 7,144 sf of prefunction space; 5 boardrooms

Dining: Upscale casual dining available at Brisa Bistro, with an outstanding wine list; cocktails and lighter fare available at the lobby lounge; top-notch catering services (kosher kitchen available)

Recreation: Fitness center, swimming pool; golf and tennis nearby; easy access to shopping, additional dining options, and Miami's many attractions

Access: Just 15 minutes from Miami International Airport

Contact: Kathryn Deeb, Conference Manager, (305) 714-3706, Fax: (305) 714-3641; kdeeb@radisson-miami.com; www.radisson.com

Circle #20 on Free Information Card



With 15,000 square-feet of flexible meeting space, two award-winning restaurants, a luxurious spa, and private beach on Biscayne Bay, our hotel is the ideal site for a true meeting of the minds or a memorable incentive event. For our sales office or more information, please call (305) 913 8342 or visit www.mandarinoriental.com



Miami's only AAA Five Diamond Hotel and Restaurant

Mandarin Oriental, Miami, 500 Brickell Key Drive, Miami, FL 33131

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