

A Local's Guide To The Best And Newest In Miami And The Beach, For Art Basel And The Winter Season



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The “the season” has arrived, when the art world and those seeking sun and fun converge in Miami. [Art Basel](#) Miami Beach, from December 5-8, and its concurrent exhibits and events around Miami and the Beach, are filled with especially tempting choices.

I live in Miami, and my first suggestion is to leave extra time for moving around and, when possible, avoid the infamous traffic of [Art Week](#). I'd use public transport when possible, including free trolleys. The elevated “people mover” shuttles you 4.4 miles in a loopy journey high above downtown's streetscape, river and bay. To bring you downtown, there's the Metroliner, Tri-rail and Brightline. (To cross the bay, aside from the bus, I'd call Uber or Lyft; parking is a real problem, unless you pay big for valet.)

Movin' Over Miami. Get off at the people mover's Museum station for [PAMM](#) — the Perez Art Museum Miami — with its award-winning building and contemporary collection. The [Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science](#) is adjacent, and along Biscayne Bay, Museum Park is filled with sculptures and walkways, and views of the Port of Miami.



Port of Miami from Museum Park LEA LANE

In nearby Bayfront Park, [Bayside Marketplace](#) offers middle-range shops, entertainment and restaurants. Sailboats depart for two-hour sunset sails (Miami Marina), under the Rickenbacker Causeway and by Key Biscayne. (Coming for Super Bowl 2020 in February is a new ferris wheel, something most cities now seem to crave.)

The people mover's Omni station is near [The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts](#), second largest concert venue in the country. Two halls designed by Cesar Pelli sprawl on either side of Biscayne Boulevard, united by the art-deco former Sears Tower. World-class performances are always going on.

An entertainment and restaurant scene is developing near [The Olympia Theater](#) at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts on Flagler Street. Built in 1926, the Mediterranean courtyard interior is awash in turrets, towers, peacocks, golden balconies and stars twinkling on a teal blue ceiling. Peek in if you can.

Arted Up. Art Basel has sparked a world-class Miami art scene for a dozen years. [Wynwood](#), the still gritty but emerging neighborhood just north of downtown, offers one of the largest and best concentrations of street art in the world, including the curated [Wynwood Walls](#).

Wynwood's former warehouses and factories have been converted to scores of galleries and alternative art spaces, including [The Bakehouse Art Center](#) (yes, housed where bread used to bake), with studios for artists nearby.

Upcoming arts areas nearby include [Little Haiti](#), and [Allapattah](#), spurred by the recent move there of [The Rubell Family Collection/Contemporary Arts Foundation](#).

[Brightline](#), soon to be Virgin Trains, connecting West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale to Miami, will debut a train wrapped with images drawn from Haring's iconic work in the Rubell's collection, with additional Haring imagery on display in its West Palm Beach station.

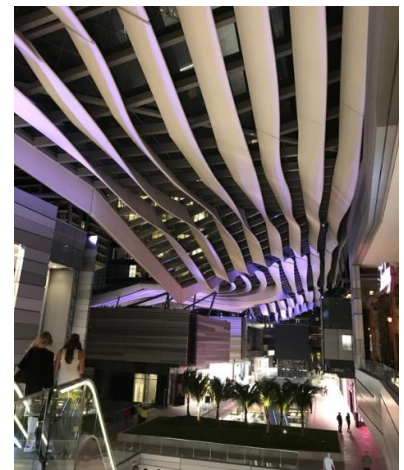
[El Espacio 23](#), the just opening 28,000-square-foot arts center, is another soon-to-be Allapattah landmark, a repurposed warehouse where artists can live and work. It offers exhibitions drawn chiefly from the Jorge Pérez compendium, known for strong Latin American representation,

The [Chapel](#) of La Merced is located in Allapattah behind Corpus Christi Church, a jewel of Baroque art and architecture, completed by local artisans under the leadership of Corpus Christi's Father Jose Luis Menendez. It includes one of the most important collections of Spanish-colonial art in North America.

For decorative arts, the nearby [Design District](#) is known for its sleek modern architecture, upscale interior design stores and art galleries. Public art includes the Fly's Eye Dome, a geodesic dome designed by inventor Buckminster Fuller. The [Institute of Contemporary Art](#) offers a lovely sculpture garden to rest a bit from all the glam.

Brickell's Booming. Miami's toniest avenue extends from Biscayne Boulevard, south of the Miami River and along the bay. New skyscrapers and condos line the corridor, and glam neighborhood hotels include The Four Seasons, and The Mandarin Oriental on Brickell Key, a five-minute causeway walk from Brickell.

[Mary Brickell Village](#), with galleries, shops, and clubs, is a block west of the avenue, spreading between 5th and 15th streets. [Brickell City Centre](#) is the new high-end shopping and mixed-use venue, offering stylish boutiques and a weekend farmers market. And the Miami river is finally getting its due, with sculpture-lined walkways, restaurants and new condos, and the first segment of the 10-mile [Underline](#) park to open next summer below the Metromover.



Brickell City Centre's roof converts breezes into cooling, without aircon. L&L&L&L

Land of Lincoln ... Road. Near the main site of Art Basel in the [Miami Beach Convention Center](#), the famed pedestrian open-air mall on Miami Beach is centered with Miami Modern (MiMo) fountains, benches and overhangs, and is about to get an upgrade. There's a market in season — chotchkes, antiques, orchids, fresh-squeezed juices and empanadas, and *mucho mas*.

[Botero on Lincoln Road](#) is an exhibit with thirteen monumental bronze sculptures by renowned Colombian artist Fernando Botero, through March 31. The drop-dead deco, [Colony Theatre](#) showcases the New Theatre company and other cultural events. And check out the Mediterranean-style Miami Beach Community church for Sunday chamber music.

A block off Lincoln, [The New World Symphony's](#) academy of young musicians led by Maestro Michael Tilson Thomas has a dramatic, interactive concert hall designed by Frank Gehry. Live concerts project on a wall overlooking a two-and-a-half acre park. The adjacent [Timeout Market](#) is a great place to pick up food from around the world to picnic there.

A 20-minute walk away along the boardwalk lining the broad Atlantic beach, the new [Faena district](#) is a cultural neighborhood with museums, hotels and arts venues. Along the way, peek in the lobbies of the mid-century hotels of [Collins Avenue](#) including the artsy Sagamore, the classic Delano, and the Raleigh with its famous violin-shaped pool.

The glamorous Setai, with its Damien Hirst gilded mastodon by the pool, is across from the newly reconstructed [Bass Museum](#) on Collins Park, housing an outstanding collection of contemporary art.

SoBe, SoFi, So Fine. Art-deco and art-moderne hotels line [Ocean Drive](#), across from Lummus Park and the Atlantic. You can now dine in the shell-encrusted dining room and linger by the decadent, mosaic-bottomed grotto at [The Villa Casa Casuarina](#). This was the famed Gianni Versace mansion, now a boutique hotel.

[Washington Avenue](#) offers a club scene, and The Miami Beach Cinematheque for artsy films. Collins Avenue has trendy shops. Historic [Espanola Way](#), between Washington and Jefferson, looks like an operatic Spanish village, and hosts a weekend market. And The [Wolfsonian Museum](#) features late-nineteenth to mid-20th century art and objects

[South of Fifth Street](#) (SoFi), new restaurants are opening every week. [Joe's Stone Crab](#) is renowned. Tip: Go to adjacent Joe's takeout for claws, cole slaw and key lime pie, then walk to [South Pointe Park](#), where cruise ships heading into the Atlantic pass so close it seems you can touch them.