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## Intercontinental Hotel Is Central To The Downtown Miami Experience



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Travel

*I write with a journalist's mind and a poet's heart*

It might be too late to book a room in Downtown Miami for the much anticipated Super Bowl LIV, but it is never too late to enjoy a luxurious stay at the Intercontinental Hotel, overlooking Biscayne Bay. The hotel boasts 653 guest rooms, 101,000 square feet of meeting space, a luxury spa, fine restaurant experiences and a view that rivals any decorative wall art.

The hotel lobby is an instant draw, bringing style and comfort to the path of the road-weary traveler. Besides access to two restaurants and a bar, the lobby features an 18-foot tall sculpture made entirely of travertine marble, entitled "Spindle," created by master sculptor Henry Moore. The lobby was actually built around the sculpture because of its massive size and weight.

The restaurant at the back end of the lobby is called Toro, Toro. Here, guests can indulge in Chef Richard Sandoval's meaty creations of a pan Latin menu. The Parmesan Crusted Sea Scallops, Angus Filet Mignon, and El Havano for dessert (a banana rum cake with flan, espresso, and pecan crunch) rounds out the perfect meal before heading to the hotel's rooftop pool or wellness center and fitness room.

On the 5th floor, overlooking the Bay, guests can enjoy light fare at Bluewater Restaurant. Pizza, salad and panini paired with the right wine, beer or cocktail, and the traveler will see the advantages of a casual lifestyle. Likewise, Ole Restaurant in the hotel's lobby keeps the culinary levels higher than the formality. This ala carte and buffet breakfast stop sources local fare to fuel the guests' travel tanks, and set them on their way.

The rooms at the Intercontinental are spacious and welcoming, featuring marble bathrooms, flat panel TVs and in-room movies and games. Standard rooms vary between bay view and city view.

The executive rooms offer the Miami skyline, while the suites display the view of Biscayne Bay. ClubIntercontinental members have exclusive access to the Club Lounge on the 29th floor where a complimentary breakfast, beverages throughout the day, and hors d'oeuvres are among the perks.

The location of the Intercontinental Hotel is one of those perks. Downtown Miami is located right across the MacArthur Causeway or the Venetian Way from the frenetic town of South Beach, so a stay at the Intercontinental is like killing two birds with one stone. Though, one need not cross a bridge to fill an itinerary with exciting activities. In walking distance from the Intercontinental Hotel is Bayside Marketplace, an open-air mall with 150 stores, ranging from national brands to local merchants and souvenir shops.



Many of the local sites are accessed through the use of scooters, through companies such as Lyft, that can be rented streetside for a nominal fee. The program began as an experiment but has caught on mostly among the younger visitors and residents.

In addition to the walkable venues, a short ride on the MetroMover, a free and autonomous above ground train, will bring the visitor to such sights as the Frost Science Museum and the Perez Art Museum Miami (PAMM).

**Figure 1 Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) is a contemporary art museum located in Downtown Miami, Florida.**

The MetroMover makes a forty-five minute loop with several stops throughout the downtown Miami area. The Intercontinental Hotel is on the Omni Loop section of the MetroMover.

After a night out to nearby Coconut Grove for great restaurants such as Ariete, or if staying close with Downtown Miami's Novikov, the guest of the Intercontinental Hotel will return to a unique light show on the impressive edifice of the hotel, depicting the digitized movements of a real dancer. This certainly puts a new angle on seeing one's name up in lights. This is Miami, the Heat, the Super Bowl host, a consistent mention on the bucket list.

