Bienvenidos a Miami

Thank you so much for blessing us with your presence at our wedding. We hope this guide helps you plan your trip to Miami.

Drew & Kristy
The wedding and reception will take place at St. Hugh Catholic Church located at 3460 Royal Road Coconut Grove, Florida 33133.

Kristy’s First Communion at St. Hugh with Msgr. Vaughan, who will marry us.

You can also receive updated information about the wedding at our website: Tilson/Hernandez Wedding
Welcome to Miami. We are excited to have so many family and friends coming to Miami to share in the joyful celebration of our wedding. Kristy put together this guide in support of the Notre Dame Club of Miami for the National Championship game this year. We have modified it a bit, but much of the information is useful for out-of-town guests looking for things to do while visiting Miami. We focused on the Coconut Grove area, as the wedding and reception will be held in that neighborhood of Miami. Please enjoy your time, and do not hesitate to contact either of us with your questions:

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Hotels, Restaurants and Activities

By neighborhoods
(Coconut Grove, South Beach, Miami Beach, Brickell/Downtown, Coral Gables, Key Biscayne)

Coconut Grove

Among the hustle and bustle of Miami's ever-growing metropolis sits a laid-back, waterfront community unlike any other. Nestled between Biscayne Bay and Highway U.S. 1, this village-within-a-city offers visitors a unique alternative experience to the standard South Florida visit. With everything from gallery walks and outdoor dining, to sailing regattas and wacky festivals, there are endless activities. We recommend the nightlife on Grand Ave. and Commodore Plaza for the under 30 nightlife. But please do not go west of Commodore on Grand as it is not as safe.
Hotels
Nestled within this bayside community are nine world renowned and boutique hotels. These luxurious accommodations offer guests, breathtaking views overlooking lush Coconut Grove and Sailboat Bay and are walking distance from the Center Village’s lively sidewalk cafes, modern art galleries and unique shopping destinations. Some of the hotels that we would suggest include: Mutiny, Residence Inn by Marriott, Hampton, Sonesta and Mayfair.

CocoWalk is the renowned Tuscan-style shopping, dining, and lifestyle center located in the heart of Coconut Grove. Its mix of unique boutiques, casual dining, specialty shops, art galleries, movie theaters and live music entertainment results in a chic yet casual environment.

Restaurants
Dining in Coconut Grove satisfies all five senses. When paired with a savory, delectable dish from any of our 50 restaurants, international aromas and lush tropical views make for the perfect meal. From casual sidewalk cafes to award-winning hotels, you’ll hear worldly conversations, while feeling right at home in the Village Center. With some of the more well-known restaurants such as: Cheesecake Factory, Johnny Rockets, and Chili’s, The Grove also offers a wide range of small casual cafes to sit and enjoy a relaxed dining experience at: Calamari Italian, Le Bouchon du Grove, LuLu, Mr. Moe’s, Peacock Garden Cafe, Green Street Cafe and El Churrasquito Argentino.

Monty’s at Coconut Grove is a raw bar that serves crab legs, stone crabs, oysters, claws, shrimp, conch, desserts, key lime pie, drinks and live music.
For a break and bit of relaxation, we recommend a stroll in David Kennedy Park and grabbing an A.C. Icee in the parking lot. Maybe you will even see A.C. himself. Drew recommends the ½ pina colada and half cherry 😊

Continuing with relaxation in mind, you can stop by the farmer’s market on Saturday morning in Coconut Grove and try some of the best dairy free ice cream - ever! Chill in Zen Village or Barnacle State Park.

South Beach

When you think “Miami”, you think South Beach, or Sobe, a section of the city of Miami Beach located due east of the city of Miami, between Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Perhaps the most popular part of Sobe is Ocean Drive, which runs parallel to the beach and is lined with restaurants, smaller Art Deco hotels, bars, and shops on one side and the ocean on the other. One block west of Ocean Drive is Collins Avenue, home to many historic Art Deco buildings, small and large hotels, and nightclubs. Another block west is Washington Avenue, where you can find brand name shops, hotels, restaurants, and also some of the world’s largest and most popular nightclubs.

Sobe runs from approximately from 5th Avenue to 17th Avenue and Ocean Drive to Alton Road.
Hotels

There are well over 100 hotels in South Beach – from small boutique hotels to luxury resorts, and everything in between. Prices range accordingly. Below are a few hotels that we suggest. Hotels like the Ritz-Carlton, Loews, Delano and The National are just a stone’s throw from all the action on South Beach, but are themselves in slightly quieter areas. Whereas Ocean Drive’s smaller Art Deco hotels like The Colony, The Tides and The Avalon are right across from the beach and a bit noisier day and night. Here are a few more to consider:

- Courtyard by Marriott on South Beach
- Hotel Chelsea
- Z Ocean Hotel
- The Villa by Barton G (former residence of Versace)
- The Angler’s Boutique Resort
- W South Beach
- Carlton Hotel South Beach

Restaurants

There is no shortage of places to eat in South Beach, from an authentic Italian eatery on Washington Ave to Joe’s Stone Crab on the Southern tip of Sobe, famous for their key lime pie, and yes, everything in between.

One good area to find many restaurants is Lincoln Road Mall, a pedestrian outdoor mall that spans nearly 15 blocks between Alton Road and Washington Avenue. It is a thriving shopping and dining district area with unique stores, restaurants, cafes and galleries. Most restaurants offer either indoor or outdoor seating. Click here for a directory of restaurants. Another good cluster of restaurants can be found on Española Way, an area modeled after the Mediterranean villages of Spain and France, with many restaurants and shops.

Ocean Drive also has several restaurants with indoor and outdoor seating. As you head west, Washington Avenue and Alton Road also have restaurants, often more economical than those on Ocean Drive. Here are just a few restaurants that we recommend:

- Casa Lario on Ocean Dr. for Cuban food, in Gloria & Emilio Estefan’s restaurant
- De Rodriguez Cuba for more modern Cuban food
- News Cafe on Ocean Dr. (Versace was a regular and it is open 24 hours)
- Jugo Fresh on Alton Rd. if you are looking for fresh pressed juices
- Eleventh Street Diner on Washington Ave. (open 24 hours)
- Five Napkin Burger on Lincoln Road Mall
- Pasha’s for healthy Mediterranean food on Lincoln Road Mall
- Duraku for sushi and lychee martinis on Lincoln Road Mall
- La Sandwicherie for affordable and large portion sandwiches on 14th and Washington
- Alta Mare on Lincoln Road Mall for fresh seafood and possible Enrique Iglesias and Anna Kournikova sightings.
- Pizza Rustica on Lincoln Road Mall or 8th & Washington for a unique, affordable take on pizza
- Prime 112 Restaurant on Ocean Drive for a classy and top rated steakhouse
Activities

- Walking food tour of South Beach called [Miami Food Tours](#)
- Salsa lessons at [YUCA](#) on Lincoln Road Mall Fridays and Sundays, all levels
- Saturday farmer’s market on [Lincoln Road Mall](#) on Sundays
- Dining and Shopping on [Española Way](#)
- Public and free beaches in South Beach, which you can access from Ocean Drive and any Avenue, but the most popular sections of the beach are between 7th Ave and 12th Ave. Bring your own chairs and umbrellas or rent them from kiosks on the beach. Food and beverages are allowed, but no pets.

Nightlife (most do enforce a dress code, no flip flops or shorts)

- [The Rose Bar](#) at Delano Hotel on 16th and Collins
- [The Martini Bar](#) in the Raleigh Hotel on 17th and Collins
- [Wet Willies](#) and [The Clevelander](#) on Ocean Drive are popular too
- [Lucky Strike](#) is an bowling alley with a DJ, full bar, side food service, and lounges on 16th and Michigan. Come see where Drew’s brother Matt was nearly denied admission for wearing jeans, and his response- “What? This is a bowling alley…..right?”
- There are also several dive bars and clubs, many along Washington Avenue

Getting Around

Sobe is very walkable, but you can also [rent a bike](#). If you do not plan to stray from Sobe, you could manage without a rental car and get to the Stadium on the [buses](#) the Club is chartering. If you want to explore other parts of Miami, we suggest renting a car. Miami is tricky to get around with public transportation, which includes [buses](#) and a limited [Metro Rail system](#). Getting to Sobe from the Airport is easy, either by taxi (for about $35) or the [Airport Flyer Bus](#) for $2.35.
Miami Beach – North of South Beach

South Beach is the most iconic section of Miami Beach, but it is not the only part. Where Sobe ends, the rest of Miami Beach begins, and there are many hotels from which to chose. As you move North of 17th Avenue, the clusters of shops and restaurants becomes less dense. But if you crave the beach without the hustle and bustle of Sobe, then this part of Miami Beach is for you, roughly from Collins and 40th to 70th Avenue.

Hotels

You will find fewer of the budget hotels as you travel north of Sobe, but there are a few economical hotels in this area, as well as several luxury hotels. In general, as you move north of Sobe, it is quieter. Here are just a few, they are all on the water.

- Fontainebleau Miami Beach
- Eden Roc Renaissance Miami Beach
- The Palms Hotels and Spa
- Soho Beach House
- Canyon Ranch Hotel and Spa
- Best Western Atlantic Beach Resort
- Howard Johnson Plaza Dezerland and Spa
- Days Inn Miami Beach Oceanside
- Holiday Inn Miami Beach Oceanfront
Restaurants

The further North you go from South Beach, the more sporadic the restaurants. But most of the resort style hotels have excellent restaurants and The Fontainebleau Hotel has more than one restaurant, all are excellent, especially [Scarpetta]. Canyon Ranch also has a wonderful restaurant.

There are also many gems to be found on Collins between the 40s and the 70s Avenues, like [New Campo Argentino Miami], or of course, [IHOP] on 69th and Collins.

Nightlife

This area of Miami Beach is less active at night, compared with Sobe, but there are a few very popular nightclubs, like [LIV] on Collins and 44th.

Activities

- The Beach – here the beaches are beautiful and less crowded than on Sobe. You can access the free beaches through a hotel or one of the many municipal parking lots that have access to the boardwalk and beach. Click [here] for a list of parking lots with access to the boardwalk.
- Drive North to the [Shops at Bal Harbour] an outdoor luxury shopping mall with upscale shops and restaurants.
- Drive or walk (40 blocks or so) south to South Beach – you can walk most of it on our boardwalk that runs from 21st to 46th Street. Sobe is from 5th to 17th.
Brickell/Downtown

About Brickell and Downtown

Brickell is Miami’s financial district, also home to many young professionals. Along Brickell Avenue you will find mostly fine restaurants.

Downtown is busy during the day, with several restaurants for the working lunch crowd, but does not offer much of a nightlife, except for a few spots right on the water, described below.

Both Brickell and Downtown are very easy to navigate by foot or using the Metro Rail/Metro Mover. Metro Rail costs $2 each way, the Metro Mover is FREE.

Reaching this area from Miami International Airport is convenient by taxi (approximately $30) or Metro’s Orange Line.

Hotels

In Brickell include:
- Four Seasons Hotel Miami
- Conrad Miami
- JW Marriott Miami
- JW Marriott Marquis Miami
- Viceroy Miami
- Mandarin Oriental Hotel & Spa on Brickell Key
- The Hampton Inn Mary Brickell Village
- Hotel Urbano at Brickell

In Downtown include:
- Marriott Biscayne Bay
- Hilton Miami Downtown
- Holiday Inn
- Double Tree Grand Hotel

Also enjoy the FREE City of Miami Trolley.
Beneath the towering architectural masterpieces that rise along the eastern edge of Brickell you will find quiet, shaded streets that offer charm and a relaxing atmosphere that is unheard of among major metropolitan areas. **Mary Brickell Village** is a mix of restaurants and shops including famous high-end designers and a weekly Sunday Market from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. where you can find lots of local products such as plants, jewelry, arts & crafts. **Opa Greek Tavern** (which offers Sunday Brunch) and **Blue Martini Lounge** are popular spots too, and Blue Martini stays open until 5am many days.

Other notable restaurants in Brickell include, **Gordon Biersch**, **Perricone’s Marketplace & Café**, **Azul Restaurant** and **Pasha’s** Slightly west of Brickell, on Coral Way is **Lifefood Gourmet** that serves exclusively organic and gluten free food, Venus Williams and Woody Harrelson have been known to stop by and enjoy both their raw dishes and their cooked dishes, like grass-fed beef and turkey burgers.

Activities in Downtown include

**Bayside Marketplace** a large outdoor mall with many shops, restaurants, **bay cruises** and close by is **Bongo’s Cuban Café** owned by Gloria and Emilio Estefan. It is a great Cuban restaurant by day and fantastic club by night.

**The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts**

If you rented a car or rent a taxi, you can also travel North to Miami’s **Design District** or South to **Coral Gables** and **Coconut Grove**

If you have a rental car or can take a taxi, do not miss **Garcia’s Fish Market** open for lunch, it is a chart topper year after year where you can eat extra-fresh fish while sitting on the river deck. It is a very casual spot for great food.

We’d also like to suggest, though it is a few miles north of Downtown, a wonderful restaurant called **Michy’s**, a modern bistro that draws upon local farmers and fishermen to create seasonal and whimsical dishes, a style the chef calls “luxurious comfort food.”
Located four miles from Miami International Airport, the "City Beautiful" has around 140 dining establishments and gourmet shops, and many notable international retailers. Among the landmarks in Coral Gables are the Venetian Pool, the Biltmore Hotel, John Martins Irish Pub, Miracle Mile, and Restaurant Row on Giralda Avenue.

Hotels:
- The Biltmore Hotel
- Hyatt Regency Coral Gables
- The Westin Colonade Coral Gables
- Courtyard Marriott Coral Gables
- St. Michel
- Holiday Inn

Restaurants:
- Miracle Mile has several restaurants, and Restaurant Row, two blocks north of Miracle Mile on Giralda also has several great ones, like Graziano's Argentine Steak House, Miss Saigon, Bistro.
- Craving Cuban? Try Havana Harry’s, Sergio's, or the iconic Versailles on 8th Street

Activities:
- Miracle Mile and adjacent streets Giralda and Aragon have miles of shops, independent bookstores, cafes and salons. A few blocks south of Miracle Mile is Village of Merrick Park with upscale shops and restaurants, and a free trolley to and from Miracle Mile. A few miles South is Fairchild Tropical Gardens.
Key Biscayne is a tropical island paradise just six miles off the coast of Miami. It is a world-class community and premier vacation spot. The Rickenbacker Causeway connects the Village of Key Biscayne to the Mainland, by way of Virginia Key. For those wanting a truly relaxing experience in Miami, with the convenience of beaches, shops and restaurants in walking distance, we recommend Key Biscayne, only 18 miles from Miami International Airport. The island is seven miles long, two miles wide, bordered by Bill Baggs State Park to the south and Crandon Park to the north – both excellent beaches.

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**Hotels**

- Ritz Carlton at Key Biscayne
- Silver Sands Beach Resort

**Restaurants**

- Rusty Pelican on Virginia Key
- Ayesha’s Indian Restaurant
- Costa Med
- Puntino Italian Restaurant
- Origin Asian Bistro

**Activities**

- Bill Baggs State Park
- Golf (see page 13)
- Charter a deep-sea fishing boat
- Rent a jet-ski, water bike, windsurfing board, or bike
- Snorkel
Recommended Golf Clubs in Miami

1. Miami International Links/Melreese Country Club
2. The Biltmore Hotel Golf Course
3. Crandon Golf Key Biscayne
4. Miami Beach Golf Club
More ideas for activities around Miami

Guided walking tour of Little Havana – But tour or no tour, we highly recommend Azucar Homemade Cuban Ice Cream – how does guava, or sweet plantain ice cream sound?

Fairchild Tropical Garden – walk garden paths surrounded by the wonders and beauty of nature, talk to experts in horticulture, conservation and science, view impressive art, see butterflies and birds at every turn

Zoo Miami – rated one of the best Zoos in the US

Schnebly Winery and Brewery – specializes in tropical wines

Barnacle State Park – Built in 1891, offers a glimpse of Old Florida during The Era of the Bay. Situated on the shore of Biscayne Bay, this was the home of Ralph Middleton Munroe, one of Coconut Grove’s most charming and influential pioneers.

Biscayne National Park – Glass bottom boat trips, island excursions, snorkeling adventures, canoe trips, Ranger talks, Family Fun Fest, underwater videos, displays and art exhibits

Shark Valley in the Everglades – rent a bike & ride 15 miles amidst the alligators, or take the tram

Anhinga Walking Trail in the Everglades – one of the most popular self-guided walking trails because of its abundance of wildlife, especially in the winter (alligators, turtles, anhingas, herons, egrets, and many more)

Fruit and Spice Park – grows tropical and subtropical fruits from around the world, walk it or take the tram tour

Jungle Island – close to South Beach and fun for kids

Miami Children’s Museum – also close to South Beach

Venetian Pool – a bit cold in January for us locals, but what a pool! Drained and filled every day.

The Falls Shopping Mall – shopping, eating, and waterfalls

Miami Seaguarium – get splashed by Lolita the killer whale, swim with dolphins and see where Flipper was filmed

Individual or Group Kayaking and Boat Tour by Eco-Adventures – think the Fisher Regatta on Saint Mary’s Lake, but South Florida Style! Maybe organize a tour with friends or family

L&H Fishing Excursions – off Key Biscayne, or call any day to find out the fresh catch you can buy and cook at home/hotel.