

THE ARTS

top picks

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THE ARTS

Miami's artistic merits are obvious, even from a distance. Could there be a better creative base? There's Southern American homegrown talent, migratory snowbirds bringing the funding and attention of northeastern galleries, and the immigrants, of course, from all across the Americas. All these disparate cultures communicate their values via the language of artistic expression. Creole, Spanish and English, after all, are poor languages compared to dance, music and theater.

Yet for years Miami was too pretty to be taken seriously. 'Each place has its own advantages – heaven for the climate, and hell for the society,' Mark Twain once said, a quote that summed up many a snob's opinion of this town. Miami's loyal, vibrant arts community seethed and continued to patronize itself, egged on by yearly arrivals of artsy eccentrics seeking South Florida's anything-goes climes.

And then Art Basel came. The Western Hemisphere's largest contemporary arts festival jogged the world's memory, reminding it that the Magic City earned its nickname by being the kind of town that isn't afraid to challenge conventions, including – actually, especially – aesthetic conventions.

Today art is part of both Miami's character and brand, an integral component of city identity that's used to both attract visitors (Art Basel) and push the revitalization/gentrification of neighborhoods from Downtown to Wynwood. In a city that moves to a Latin/Caribbean beat, it's not surprising there are excellent music and dance troupes here, but 'classical' culture is also evident and has a brand new, beautiful home: the [Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts](#) (p65).

The following are listings of Miami venues. For an in-depth analysis of trends in literature, music, theater, etc in Miami, please see [Arts](#) (p28).

PERFORMING ARTS VENUES

ADRIENNE ARSHT CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS Map pp66–7

☎ 305-949-6722, 786-468-2000; [www.arshtcenter.org](#); 1300 Biscayne Blvd; Metromover Omni Skeptics, we're sorry, but it's clear this enormous centerpiece of northern Downtown was worth both the wait and the expense. The magnificent venue manages to both humble and enthrall visitors who can't help but marvel at the split-shell design and the way the Arsht seizes upon and utilizes the most common natural resource in Florida: natural, golden sunlight, which comes crashing through huge plate-glass windows. Today the Arsht is where the biggest cultural acts in Miami come to perform; a show here is a must-see on any Miami trip.

COLONY THEATRE Map pp52–3

☎ 305-674-1026; 1040 Lincoln Rd, South Beach
A stunning deco showpiece, this small 1934 performing arts center has 465 seats and

great acoustics. It's a treasure that hosts everything from movies and musicals to theatrical dramas, ballet and off-Broadway productions.

CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Map pp100–1

☎ 305-448-7421; [www.coralgablescongregational.org](#); 3010 DeSoto Blvd, Coral Gables
In addition to its impressive choirs, this church hosts various concert series, from jazz to classical, all of which draw regional crowds to its beautiful Mediterranean setting.

FILLMORE MIAMI BEACH AT THE JACKIE GLEASON THEATER Map pp52–3

☎ 305-673-7300; [www.gleasontheater.com](#); 1700 Washington Ave, South Beach
Built in 1951, the Miami Beach's premiere showcase for touring Broadway shows, orchestras and other big musical productions has 2700 seats and excellent acoustics. Jackie Gleason chose to make this theater the home for his long-running 1960s TV show, but now you will find an eclectic lineup of programs – from Elvis

ARTS FESTIVALS

Nary a month goes by without some kind of arts festival going off in one of Miami's neighborhoods. As with all things, events centered on South Beach tend to be well-hyped and can be difficult to attend, although that shouldn't dissuade you from trying to show up. Besides the following list, any of the city's art museums and galleries offer schedules of upcoming events, while the [Miami Art Guide](http://www.miamiartguide.com) (www.miamiartguide.com) is an invaluable insider's peek into the city art scene, and is free and available anywhere around town.

Dance

Annual Tango Fantasy Festival (<http://totango.net/ustc>) Olé! The largest tango festival in the world outside Argentina takes place in late May and features performances and workshops that span nine days.

Florida Dance Festival (p14; www.floridadanceassociation.org/dance_festival.htm) Choreographers, performers, teachers and students from around the world gather for two weeks in June for learning and performing.

Ifé-Ilé Afro-Cuban Dance & Music Festival (www.ife-ile.org) Anchored by dance, this Afro-Cuban festival also features music, films, art and readings in October via Miami-Dade Community College.

International Ballet Festival of Miami (www.miamihispanicballet.com) Held in September, the week of events showcases America's biggest modern, ballet, jazz and ballroom dance companies.

Music

FIU Music Festival (www.fiu.edu) Featuring everything from chamber music to blues shows, this world-class fest hits every October.

JVC Jazz Festival Miami Beach (www.festivalnetwork.com) Held in various venues in early May, the jazz fest, like other incarnations in places like New York and Newport, attracts top performers in the genre.

Miami Ultra Music Festival (www.ultramusicfestival.us) Ultra sweeps Miami in March with a massive dose of the freshest in electronica. Past artists have included Paul Van Dyk, Tiësto, Carl Cox and Goldie.

International Caribbean Music Festival (☎ 305-891-2944) This mega-concert, generally held in November before Thanksgiving, brings big-name boombastic lineups to Bayfront Park.

Theater

International Hispanic Theater Festival (www.teatroavante.com) A city-wide festival, held in the first two weeks of June, features performances in Spanish, Portuguese and English by companies from all over the world.

Here & Now Festival (www.miamilightproject.com) An annual favorite of the Miami Light Project, this is a March showcase of cutting edge works-in-progress from local dramatists.

City Theatre's Summer Shorts (www.citytheatre.com) This series of one-act plays, held in June, features works from both local and global playwrights.

Film

Miami International Film Festival (p13; www.miamifilmfestival.com) The 23-year-old happening, held in February, has a focus on Ibero-American cinema and documentaries. It's launched the international careers of filmmakers including Pedro Almodóvar and Atom Egoyan.

Miami Latin Film Festival The April event, held in South Beach, includes films from and about the Americas, France, Portugal and Spain.

Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival (p14; www.mglff.com) Joining a series of LGBT film fests held in cities across America, this April fest, now in its eighth year, brings queer features, shorts and docs to the big screen.

Brazilian Film Festival of Miami (www.brazilianfilmfestival.com) Held at the [Colony Theatre](#) (opposite) in June before it travels to NYC in July, this dynamic cultural fest was founded in 1997.

Costello or Albita one night, to the Dutch Philharmonic or over-the-top musicals the next.

GUSMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS Map pp66–7

☎ 305-374-2444; www.gusmancenter.org; 174 E Flagler St, Downtown

This ornate venue, within an elegantly renovated 1920s movie palace, services a huge variety of performing arts – film festivals, symphonies, ballet and touring shows. The acoustics are excellent and the fresco ceiling is covered in twinkling stars and clouds.

LIGHT BOX THEATRE & MIAMI LIGHT PROJECT Map p82

☎ 305-576-4350; www.miamilightproject.com; 3000 Biscayne Blvd, Wynwood

The Miami Light Project is a nonprofit cultural foundation that represents innovative shows from theater troupes and performance artists from around the world; recent shows have included Rha Goddess, Global Cuban Fest and Kristina Wong. Shows are performed across the city, but the project is housed at Light Box Studio, which runs an impressive performing-arts program that includes the Mad Cat Theatre original production company, Dolla Jams open-mic series, the D Projects hip-hop theater troupe, and the Miami Hip Hop Exchange performance and education program.

LINCOLN THEATRE Map pp52–3

☎ 305-531-3442; 555 Lincoln Rd, South Beach
Miami Beach's theatrical jewel, an intimate house with great acoustics and a perfect location, hosts a wide variety of performances from local groups to visiting artists. It's also the home of the [New World Symphony](#) (opposite).

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AUDITORIUM Map pp44–5

☎ 305-547-5414; 2901 W Flagler St, Little Havana
On the western edge of Little Havana, this 2500-seat venue with great acoustics has been somewhat eclipsed by the Arsht center, but still holds excellent performances on its lovely stage.

TEATRO DE BELLAS ARTES off Map p88

☎ 305-547-5414; 2901 W Flagler St, Little Havana

The Teatro puts on excellent, often hilarious productions that are beloved by Miami's Latin community, but you'll need to understand Spanish to really enjoy the shows.

CLASSICAL MUSIC & OPERA

The Arsht Center rules the roost when it comes to hosting a solid collection of city chamber orchestras and symphonies. Though formerly the home of three opera companies, Miami has just one now – but it's far from lowly.

CHOPIN FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED STATES Map pp58–9

☎ 305-868-0624; www.chopin.org; 1440 JFK/79th St Causeway, Mid-Beach

This national organization hosts a treasure trove of performances for Chopin fans – the Chopin Festival, a series of free monthly concerts and the less frequent National Chopin Piano Competition, an international contest held in Miami every five years (next scheduled for 2010).

CONCERT ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA

☎ 877-311-7469; www.concertfla.org; 555 17th St, South Beach

Founded in 1967, this nonprofit association is run by dedicated folks who bring world-class music (and, occasionally, dance) to various venues in Miami, particularly to the [Arsht Center](#) (p65). Past events have included the Boston Pops symphony, Itzhak Perlman, a Flamenco Festival, the Deutsche Philharmonie and Luciano Pavarotti on the beach.

FLORIDA GRAND OPERA

☎ 800-741-1010; www.fgo.org

Founded in the 1940s, this highly respected opera company, which stages shows like *Madame Butterfly*, *La Boheme*, *Tosca* and many others, performs throughout the year at the [Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts](#) (p65) and Fort Lauderdale. Ticket offices are in Doral, but it's recommended you purchase online or on the phone.

MIAMI CHAMBER SYMPHONY

Map pp100–1

☎ 305-858-3500; Gusman Concert Hall, 1314 Miller Dr, Coral Gables; tickets \$15-30; 🎫 performances Nov-May

Its yearly series features world-renowned soloists at shows held at the University of Miami's Gusman Concert Hall, which is not to be confused with the downtown **Gusman Center for the Performing Arts** (opposite).

NEW WORLD SYMPHONY *Map pp52-3*
NWS; ☎ 305-673-3331; www.nws.org; tickets \$20-70; 📺 performances Oct-May

The deservedly heralded NWS serves as a three- to four-year preparatory program for very talented musicians who've already graduated from prestigious music schools. Founded in 1987, the NWS is led by artistic director Michael Tilson Thomas, who still conducts performances for 12 weeks a year despite his national fame and fortune. There is an astonishing number of inspiring and original performances (many of which are free), held at the **Lincoln Theatre** (opposite).

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

☎ 305-284-6477; www.music.miami.edu;
 📺 performances Oct-May

Also held at the **Gusman Concert Hall** (*Map pp100-1*; 1314 Miller Dr, Coral Gables), as well as **Clark Recital Hall** (5501 San Amaro Dr, University of Miami, Coral Gables), these free concerts highlighting university students are a bargain. Seek out the long-running international **Festival Miami** (☎ 305-284-4940), which features symphonies, chamber music and jazz, and runs from late September to late October.

DANCE

World-class ballet, and modern and international dance scenes can all be found in Miami, where many new companies have formed over the past decade.

BALLET GAMONET

☎ 305-259-9775; www.balletgamonet.org
 Founded by former Miami City Ballet dancers in 1997, this contemporary ballet troupe holds unique world premieres, often using hip musical scores written by the likes of Stewart Copeland, U2 and Dave Brubeck. Check the website or call for a performance schedule.

BLACK DOOR DANCE ENSEMBLE

☎ 305-380-6233; www.blackdoordance.org

Established by the Miami-Dade Community College dance department director, Karen Stewart, Miami's premiere African-American dance company performs modern, neo-classical ballet, traditional African pieces and Afro-Caribbean works at various city venues, usually the **Colony Theatre** (p154) on Lincoln Rd.

BRAZARTE DANCE COMPANY

off Map pp100-1
 ☎ 305-441-0372; www.brazartedance.com; Coral Gables

The first Brazilian dance company in Florida is based in Coral Gables, and presents lavish, Carmen Mirandaeque shows of Brazilian dance in many styles – folkloric, *capoeira* (an Afro-Brazilian dance that incorporates self-defense moves), lambada and samba. Call for show schedules and venues.

IFÉ-ILÉ AFRO-CUBAN DANCE

☎ 305-476-0388; www.ife-ile.org
 A nonprofit organization, Ifé-Ilé promotes cultural understanding through dance, and performs in a range of styles – traditional Afro-Cuban, mambo, rumba, conga, *chancleta* (a Latin dance in which rhythms are amplified by the dancers' wooden shoes), *son*, salsa and ritual pieces. Live musical accompaniment comes courtesy of bongos, piano, timbales and trumpets. Please call or visit the website for the latest performance schedule and associated venues.

LA ROSA FLAMENCO THEATRE

Map pp58-9
 ☎ 305-899-7730; www.panmiami.org; 13126 NW Dixie Hwy, North Miami

This professional flamenco, salsa and merengue dance company blends flamenco styles with tap, Middle Eastern and Indian movement, and also offers a full range of classes and educational programs.

MIAMI CITY BALLET *Map pp52-3*

☎ 305-929-7000; www.miamicityballet.org; 2200 Liberty Ave, Miami Beach
 Formed in 1985, this troupe is guided by artistic director Edward Villella, who studied under the great George Balanchine at the NYC Ballet. So it's no surprise Balanchine works dominate the repertoire, with shows held at a lovely three-story

headquarters designed by the famed local architectural firm Arquitectonica. The facade allows passersby to watch the dancers rehearsing through big picture windows, which kinda makes you feel like you're in a scene from *Fame*, except the weather is better and people don't spontaneously break into song. Which is a shame, really.

MIAMI HISPANIC BALLET Map pp66–7

☎ 305-549-7711; www.miamihispanicballet.com; 900 SW 1st St

Directed by Cuban-trained Pedro Pablo Peña, this troupe presents mainly classical ballets based out of the lovely Manuel Artime Theater, the 'largest small venue' in the city.

MOMENTUM DANCE COMPANY

☎ 305-858-7002; www.momentumdance.com

Performing original, modern dance programs at rotating venues for more than 25 years, this small troupe has a focus on education and children's performances.

FILM

In addition to the many standard megaplexes that play Hollywood fare, there are plenty of art-film and indie houses.

ABSINTHE HOUSE CINEMATHEQUE

Map pp100–1

☎ 305-446-7144; 235 Alcazar Ave, Coral Gables

This art-house cinema is a blend of old-fashioned and mod – it has only one screen for independent and foreign films, but a cool lounge serving as an atmospheric snack bar.

BILL COSFORD CINEMA Map pp100–1

☎ 305-284-4861; www.miami.edu/cosford; Memorial Classroom Bldg, off University Dr, Coral Gables

On the University of Miami campus, this renovated art house was launched in memory of the *Miami Herald* film critic. They do him justice, too, with a great lineup of first-run indie and foreign movies, as well as presentations from visiting filmmakers.

IMAX Map pp100–1

☎ 305-663-4629; www.imax.com; Shops at Sunset Place, 5701 Sunset Pl, Coral Gables

This virtual-reality screen, which is way larger than real life, comes with surround sound shows and dramatic, sometimes educational footage that takes advantage of its size; also catch fun stuff best viewed through 3-D glasses.

MIAMI BEACH CINEMATHEQUE

Map pp48–9

☎ 305-673-4567; www.mbcinema.com; 512 Española Way, South Beach

This new addition to the film scene is a great one, as it features a wonderfully curated program of smart documentaries, kitschy classics, holiday-timed screeners, speaking events and film-themed art exhibits. A recent sampling of eclectic programs includes a Russ Meyer tribute, Italian shorts, dance films and Judaica on film.

REGAL SOUTH BEACH CINEMA

Map pp52–3

☎ 305-674-6766; 1100 Lincoln Rd, South Beach

This mod, state-of-the-art, 21-screen theater anchors the western end of Lincoln Rd by being both an architectural delight and a filmgoers' paradise. It shows a good blend of foreign, independent, and critically acclaimed Hollywood stuff.

TOWER THEATER Map p88

☎ 305-644-3307; 1508 Calle Ocho, Little Havana

This 1926 renovated city-owned movie theater, on the National Register of Historic Places, shows Spanish-language films and dubbed English-language films, and hosts music performances and art exhibits in its lobby.

READINGS

Poetry readings abound in Miami, especially among the young hip set that flocks to the multipurpose spaces that have taken over areas like the Design District. They're far from stuffy affairs, usually blending some hip-hop, lounge music and cocktail-swilling into the mix. To hear well-known authors read from new works, stick to renowned bookshops such as Books & Books ([below](#)).

BOOKS & BOOKS Map pp52–3

☎ 305-532-3222; www.booksandbooks.com; 933 Lincoln Rd, South Beach

Both the South Beach location of this well-stocked and popular bookseller and its branch in **Coral Gables** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 305-442-4408; 265 Aragon Ave, Coral Gables) feature frequent solo readings from famous (and not so famous) local authors, as well as group readings on a particular theme (science fiction, Tibetan culture, Brazil) and various book-discussion groups.

WALLFLOWER GALLERY Map pp66-7

☎ 305-579-0069; www.wallflowergallery.com;
10 NE 3rd St, Downtown

In addition to offering a well-rounded lineup of music, dance and film, the gallery features poetry readings, spoken-word artists and open-mic poetry nights.

THEATER

There is ample evidence of a theater-loving community here, who enjoy everything from classical Greek to musicals, Spanish-language to avant-garde. There are options in a variety of neighborhoods, from Coral Gables to South Beach, many housed in lovely, stylish playhouses that evoke a long-ago, more splendid time.

ACTORS' PLAYHOUSE Map pp100-1

☎ 305-444-9293; www.actorsplayhouse.org; 280
Miracle Mile, Coral Gables

Housed within the 1948 deco Miracle Theater, this three-theater venue stages well-known musicals and comedies, children's theater on its kids stage and more avant-garde productions in its small experimental black-box space. Recent productions have included *Footloose* and *The Wizard of Oz* for the little ones.

COCONUT GROVE PLAYHOUSE

Map p95

☎ 305-442-4000; www.cgplayhouse.com; 3500
Main Hwy

This lovely state-owned theater, anchoring the Grove since 1956, gained fame via the American premiere of Samuel Beckett's

Waiting for Godot (which audiences and critics generally rejected out of hand as opaque and confusing). Although it was closed during research due to debt issues, it is set to reopen by the time you read this, and will hopefully continue to showcase some of Miami's best theater.

EDGE THEATER Map p82

☎ 305-355-0976; 3825 N Miami Ave

The Edge stays true to its name (and Design District locale) by putting on consistently contemporary, artfully imagined productions on a small stage that feels like a makeshift living room filled with props.

GABLESTAGE Map pp100-1

☎ 305-445-1119; www.gablestage.org; 1200
Anastasia Ave, Coral Gables; tickets \$15-35

Founded as the Florida Shakespeare Theatre in 1979 and now housed on the property of the Biltmore Hotel after several moves, this company still performs an occasional Shakespeare play, but mostly presents contemporary and classical pieces; recent productions have included *Frozen*, *Bug* and *The Retreat from Moscow*.

JERRY HERMAN RING THEATRE

Map pp100-1

☎ 305-284-3355; www.miami.edu/ring; 1321
Miller Dr, Coral Gables

This University of Miami troupe stages musicals, dramas and comedies, with recent productions including *Falsettos* and *Baby*. Alumni actors include Sylvester Stallone, Steven Bauer, Sandra Santiago and Ray Liotta.

NEW THEATRE Map pp100-1

☎ 305-443-5909; www.new-theatre.org; 4120
Laguna St, Coral Gables

This strong Coral Gables company performs an eclectic mix of contemporary pieces and modern classics that fall squarely between the conventional and alternative. You'll be up close and personal with the actors since there are only 70 seats in the house.

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

top picks

- Watching the Miami Heat get hot (p167)
- Betting on jai alai (p168)
- Sailing across Biscayne Bay in a chartered boat (p165)
- Bowling a half-century with South Florida Cricket Alliance (p164)
- Ultimate Frisbee on Miami Beach (p166)

SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

There are a few sides to sports in Miami. First: there is the standard American obsession with football, basketball and baseball, and on this front, Miamians can be forgiven for feeling like they have just got off a sports roller-coaster. The Miami Dolphins are the only NFL team to ever pull off a perfect season – but that was waaaay back in 1972. The Miami Heat took the NBA championship in 2006, but got swept out of the play-offs like a bad habit in 2007, which also marked one of the worst seasons ever played by the Miami University Hurricanes – otherwise one of the best college football teams in America. The Florida Marlins won the World Series in 2003, yet by 2006 they were talking about packing up and moving shop to Texas, and *now* they are apparently getting their own stadium. Latin sports are big here too; this is one of the few places in the USA that you can strap on your *cesta* at a standardized jai alai court.

The other side is self-obsession: Miamians like to look good and there are plenty of gyms, yoga classes and such about. If it makes you sweat and look better, rest assured the local trend-obsessed fitness nuts have caught onto it.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Everyone else here has the body of a freakin' Greek god, so why don't you join the club? Besides, working out is one of Miami's favorite forms of people-watching and -meeting, and you, engaged traveler, surely want to do a bit of both. If looking at gorgeous people grunting under iron doesn't do it for you, you might prefer to watch folks clear their pranas and stuff in one of Miami's many yoga studios.

DAY SPAS

On the luxurious side, **Brownes Beauty** (Map pp52–3; ☎ 305-538-5142; www.brownesbeauty.com; 841 Lincoln Rd, Miami Beach), **Agua Spa** (Map pp52–3; ☎ 305-673-2900; Delano Hotel, 1685 Collins Ave, South Beach) and **Splash Spa** (Map pp66–7; ☎ 305-358-3535; Four Seasons, 1435 Brickell Ave, Downtown Miami) will pamper you from head to toe with massages, facials, body wraps and other forms of indulgence. **Russian & Turkish Baths** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 305-867-8313; Castillo del Mar, 5445 Collins Ave, Mid-Beach) is less glamorous and very popular because of it.

GYMS

CRUNCH Map pp48–9

☎ 305-674-8222; 1259 Washington Ave, South Beach; per day/week \$21/88

This offshoot of the New York City fave has great workout equipment, a cool attitude and a slew of unique classes, from Cardio Striptease to Belly Moves. Work those abs, people.

DAVID BARTON GYM Map pp52–3

☎ 305-534-9777; 1510 Bay Rd, Miami Beach; per day/week \$20/75, 10-visit pass \$150

Another NYC branch, this is the nightclub of health clubs, where striking poses with your already-in-shape bod is the hottest activity of all. It has top-notch equipment, loud club music and dim (and flattering) lighting. Your workout pass gets you into the pool. There's another location in the **Delano Hotel** (p176).

GOLD'S GYM SOUTH BEACH

Map pp48–9

☎ 305-538-4653; 1400 Alton Rd, South Beach; per day/week \$20/90

This outpost of the world's largest gym chain is a 20,000-sq-ft 'super-fitness complex,' featuring cardio machines, free weights, an outdoor patio deck and classes in spinning, boxing, kickboxing, cardio step and lots more. It's South Beach's newest (and biggest) gym.

IDOL'S GYM Map pp52–3

☎ 305-751-7591; 715 Lincoln Lane N, South Beach; per 3 days/week \$25/50

Just off Meridian Ave, this small but hip and hottie-filled workout den is best suited for exhibitionists, as the entire space is walled with a glass storefront, giving Lincoln Rd passers-by plenty to gawk at.

SOUTH BEACH IRONWORKS Map pp52–3

☎ 305-531-4743; 1676 Alton Rd, South Beach; per day/3 days/week \$15/25/56

Popular with locals, this gym offers lots of yoga and aerobics classes and a super array of workout equipment.

YOGA & PILATES STUDIOS

MIAMI YOGASHALA Map pp52–3

☎ 305-534-0784; www.southbeachyoga.com;
210A 23rd St, South Beach

You'll find classes in guided *ashtanga*, *vinyasa* and power yoga here, plus private sessions, a yoga boutique selling yogic items and frequent workshops.

PILATES MIAMI Map p82

☎ 305-573-4430; 3936 N Miami Ave, Design District; single/5-class \$48/230

This Design District loft space offers machine training sessions as well as group classes using mats.

PRANA YOGA CENTER Map pp100–1

☎ 305-567-9812; www.pranayogamiami.com;
247 Malaga Ave, Coral Gables; single/5-class \$16/70

Located in Coral Gables, this multifaceted studio offers classes in *ashtanga*, *prana*, *vinyasa*, *hatha*, *kundalini* and guided meditation.

SYNERGY CENTER FOR YOGA & THE HEALING ARTS Map pp48–9

☎ 305-538-7073; www.synergyyoga.org; 435 Española Way, South Beach; beach/studio \$5/16

Check in here for fabulous on-the-beach yoga classes, plus studio sessions in *ashtanga*, basic, gentle, *iyengar*, *jivamukti* and pilates.

YOGA GROVE Map p95

☎ 305-448-3332; www.yogagrove.com; 3100 S Dixie Hwy, Coconut Grove; single/5-class \$15/65

Located in Coconut Grove, this studio is dedicated to the *ashtanga-vinyasa* system made popular in Mysore, India. Other classes include power yoga and the new afro yoga, a blend of yoga and African dance.

ACTIVITIES

Contrary to popular belief, Miami can be experienced from beyond the seat of a convertible car. Skate, windsurf, bike or hike; it all equals sweat and seeing the city from the ground up.

EQUIPMENT RENTAL

Bicycles & Skates

FRITZ'S SKATE SHOP Map pp52–3

☎ 305-532-1954; 730 Lincoln Rd, South Beach; per hr/day \$7.50/22; ☎ 10am–10pm

For in-line skate rentals, roll over here. Fritz gives free lessons on Sunday morning at 10:30am – just about the only time there's ever room on the mall anymore.

MANGROVE CYCLES Map p92

☎ 305-361-5555; 260 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne; per 2hr/day/week \$10/15/45; ☎ 9am–6pm Tue–Sat, 10am–5pm Sun

Key Biscayne is a perfect place to bike; Mangrove has basic, luxury and children's bicycles.

MIAMI BEACH BICYCLE CENTER

Map pp48–9

☎ 305-674-0150; 601 5th St, South Beach; per hr/day/week \$8/20/70; ☎ 10am–7pm Mon–Sat, 10am–5pm Sun

Rent Treks, Raleighs and Cannondales at this friendly neighborhood bike shop, right in the southern heart of South Beach.

Water Vessels & Gear

AQUATIC RENTAL CENTER & SAILING SCHOOL Map pp58–9

☎ 305-751-7514 day, 305-279-7424 evenings; 1275 NE 79th St; sailboat rental 2hr/3hr/4hr/day \$80/115/135/195, sailing courses \$350

If you're a bona fide seaworthy sailor, this place will rent you a vessel. If you're not, they'll teach you how to operate one.

DIVERS PARADISE Map p92

☎ 305-361-3483; Crandon Marina, 4000 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne; for certification \$250–500

Rent what you need – and learn how to use it if you're a beginner. Just know that the best spot around is in [Key Largo](#) (p188), and worth driving to if you're serious about underwater exploration.

FANTASY WATER SPORTS Map pp58–9

☎ 305-940-2628; 100 Sunny Isles Blvd, Sunny Isles; rates vary

Head to Fantasy to rent kayaks and small boats – as well as loud and dreadful jet skis, power boats and wave runners, which, by the way, kill manatees and fish, rip up sea

plants and protected sea grass, scare swimmers, annoy locals and can be dangerous besides. Hint hint.

FLORIDA YACHT CHARTERS Map pp48–9

☎ 305-532-8600, 800-537-0050; 390 Alton Road, South Beach; 🕒 9am-5:30pm

Wanna buzz down to the Keys, or, say, float over to the Bahamas? This place, at the Miami Beach Marina, rents yachts with and without captains (as long as you pass a little practical test).

SAILBOARDS MIAMI Map p92

☎ 305-361-7245; 1 Rickenbacker Causeway, Key Biscayne; single/tandem per hr \$15/20

This place also rents out kayaks, and you can also purchase a 10-hour card for \$90. To get some exercise for your lower body, you could try renting water bikes, which sit in a kayak-type boat and cost the same as the kayaks. In either case, if you're goal-oriented and need a destination, head for the little offshore sandbar.

URBAN TRAILS KAYAK RENTALS

Map pp58–9

☎ 305-947-0302; 3400 NE 163rd St, Bal Harbour, North Miami Beach

Rent a canoe or kayak for solo exploration, or join one of the company's excellent guided expeditions of the Oleta River or the Everglades.

X-ISLE SURF SHOP Map pp48–9

☎ 305-531-6110; 850 Washington Ave, South Beach; per hr/day \$10/30

Rent foam boards and buy used boards for about \$120 to \$275. New ones start at \$400.

BIKING

The **Miami-Dade County Parks & Recreation Department** (☎ 305-755-7800; www.miamidade.gov/parks) is helpful when it comes to cycling around the city, leading frequent eco bike tours through parklands and along waterfront paths, and offering a list of traffic-free cycling paths on its website. Try the Old Cutler Bike Path, which starts at the end of Sunset Dr in Coral Gables and leads to Matheson Hammock Park and Fairchild Tropical Garden; or the Rickenbacker Causeway, taking you up and over the bridge to Key Biscayne for an excellent workout combined with gorgeous water views. Pedaling to the end of the Key is a lovely way to spend

the afternoon. Oleta River State Park has a challenging dirt trail with hills for off-road adventures. For less strenuous rides, try the side roads of South Beach or the shady streets of Coral Gables and Coconut Grove.

BOWLING

Strike Miami (Map pp44–5; ☎ 305-594-0200), in the Dolphin Mall, is a good example of what happens when Miami's talent for glitz and glamour meets some humble ten-pins.

CRICKET

Really? Yup. Don't forget there's a huge West Indies and Jamaican community in South Florida. The **South Florida Cricket Alliance** (☎ 305-606-7603; www.southfloridacricket.com) is one of the largest cricket clubs in America, the **Cricket Council of the USA** (www.cricketcouncilusa.com) is based in Boca Raton, and the first dedicated cricket pitch in the country opened in Lauderhill (where the population is 25% West Indian), west of Fort Lauderdale, in 2008. Contact any of the above if you'd like to watch a test or join a team.

DIVING & SNORKELING

It's better to head down to the Keys for great diving, but between offshore wrecks and the introduction of artificial coral reefs, there's still plenty to look at in Miami if you can part the waters and scratch beneath the surface. Go on a calm day with a group; try **Bubbles Dive Center** (Map p95; ☎ 305-856-0565; 2671 SW 27th Ave, Coconut Grove), which has divers head out on weekends; or **Divers Paradise** (p163) of Key Biscayne, which is a good option. **South Beach Divers** (Map pp48–9; ☎ 305-531-6110; www.southbeachdivers.com; 850 Washington Ave, South Beach) runs regular excursions to Key Largo (again, worth the trip) and around Miami, plus offers three-day classes. Or make the very worthy drive to **Biscayne National Park** (p227; www.nps.gov/bisc), in the southeastern corner of the county, a huge park that contains the northern tip of the world's third-longest coral reef. Of the park's 173,000 acres, about 95% of them are underwater.

FISHING

Rent a pricey charter (around \$800 per day), hop aboard a 'head boat' with 100 or so other fisherfolk (boats are rarely full, and it's only about \$30), or cast a line off numerous piers

or bridges. You don't need a license if you're fishing from shore or from a bridge or pier (just check for signs, which declare some bridges off-limits). On your own, drop a line at **South Pointe Park** (Map pp48–9), off the Rickenbacker Causeway or any Key Biscayne beach or from **Haulover Beach Park** (Map pp58–9). To go for the fishing charter boat, try **Crandon Park Marina** (Map p92; ☎ 305-361-1281; 4000 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne) or **Blue Waters Sport Fishing Charters** (Map pp66–7; ☎ 305-373-5016; www.fishingmiami.net; Bayside Marketplace, 401 Biscayne Blvd, Downtown Miami). Or catch a group-fishing party boat with the **Kelley Fleet** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 305-945-3801; Haulover Beach Park, 10,800 Collins Ave, North Beach).

IN-LINE SKATING

Serious crowds have turned promenades into obstacle courses for anyone crazy enough to strap on some blades. Leave the crowded strips to experts and try the ocean side of Ocean Ave, or Lincoln Rd before the shoppers descend.

KAYAKING & CANOEING

Kayaking through mangroves, one of the coolest ecosystems on Earth, is magical: all those spidery trees kiss the water while the ocean breezes cool your flanks. In America, this sort of experience is pretty much uniquely available in places like Haulover Beach Park or Bill Baggs Florida State Park. Equipment rental is cheap, and you won't even need lessons to make the boat go where you want it to. Also, check out **Oleta River State Recreation Area** (Map pp58–9), with various grove channels on the Intracoastal Waterway that are perfect for a kayak or paddleboat (both of which are available for rental here). If you want a more wilderness-oriented adventure, canoeing around the **10,000 Islands** (see the boxed text, p223), or on the **Wilderness Waterway** (also p223) between Everglades City and Flamingo, is one of the most rewarding nature escapes in South Florida.

ROCK CLIMBING

It's unlikely that you've come to Miami to go rock climbing, but still. If the urge hits, your best bet is to head over to **X-Treme Rock Climbing** (Map pp44–5; ☎ 305-233-6623; 13972 SW 139th Ct, North Miami; per day \$15), where you'll find more than 11,000ft of climbing surfaces, including beginning routes and expert roof overhangs. You can take classes by appointment only.

RUNNING

Running is quite a popular Miami pastime, and the beach is very good for jogging, as it's flat, wide and hard-packed (apparently with amazingly hot joggers). The **Promenade** (p47) is the stylish place for both, as is the **Boardwalk** (p57), which shoots north from 21st St and offers great people-watching and scenery as you move along. But more serious runners may appreciate the Flamingo Park running track, located just east of Alton Rd between 11th and 12th Sts; the entrance is on the 12th St side at the east end of the fence. Elsewhere around the city, running is good along S Bayshore Dr in Coconut Grove, around the Riviera Country Club in Coral Gables and anywhere on Key Biscayne. Or try the jogging path that runs along the beach in Bal Harbour, made of hard-packed sand and gravel and stretching from the southern boundary of town to the Haulover Cut passageway. A great resource for races, special events and other locations is the **Miami Runners Club** (☎ 305-227-1500).

SAILING

Key Biscayne sailing is a pure joy (get outfitted at **Aquatic Rental Center & Sailing School**, p163), as is gliding along the waters just about anywhere else off Miami. Good starting points include the **Miami Beach Marina** (Map pp48–9; ☎ 305-673-6000; MacArthur Causeway, 300 Alton Rd, South Beach), which has 400 slips and all sorts of rentals; **Haulover Marine Center** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 305-945-3934; 15,000 Collins Ave, Haulover), a down-to-earth sort of spot; and **Monty's Marina** (Map p95; ☎ 305-854-7997; 2550 S Bayshore Dr, Coconut Grove), which is perfect if you have your own boat.

SURFING

We can't say it enough: offshore Miami bears no resemblance to the Banzai Pipeline. So don't get too excited. But on the Beach, the best surfing is just north of South Pointe Park, with 2ft to 5ft waves and a nice, sandy bottom. Unfortunately, there are a few drawbacks: it's usually closer to 2ft than to 5ft (except, of course, before storms); it can get a little mushy (so longboards are the way to go); and it's swamped with weekend swimmers and surfers. It's better further north near **Haulover Beach Park** (Map pp58–9) or anywhere north of, say, 70th St. **Sunny Isles Beach** (Map pp58–9), at the Sunny Isles Causeway, is also favored by surfers. Call

the recorded **surf report** (☎ 305-534-7873) for daily conditions or check in with the popular **Bird's Surf Shop** (Map pp58-9; ☎ 305-940-0929, surfline 305-947-7170; 250 Sunny Isles Blvd, North Miami Beach).

SWIMMING

Some folks in Miami *actually* swim in the gorgeous pools around town, usually just serving as backdrops for the cocktail-swilling set. If a bit of freestyle or breaststroke is your preferred method of body workout, then fear not: there are places for you, even if you're not lucky enough to be staying at a hotel with an excellent swimming hole – among the best of these are the **Delano Hotel** (p176), **Shore Club** (p176), **Biltmore Hotel** (p181), **Raleigh Hotel** (p177) and **Fontainebleau Hilton Hotel & Resort** (p179). In Coral Gables, the famous **Venetian Pool** (p99), known more as a pretty place in which to play and float and gawk, has lap-swimming hours several times a week; call for details, which change regularly. Other options for paddling include the **Flamingo Park Swimming Pool** (Map pp48-9; ☎ 305-673-7730; 999 11th St, South Beach), which has a swimming pool with some lap lanes.

TENNIS & GOLF

Key Biscayne's Tennis Center at **Crandon Park** (Map p92; ☎ 305-365-2300; 6702 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne) is best known for its annual 10-day Nasdaq 100 Tennis Open, which draws star players each March. But you too can play here; choose from two grass, eight clay and 17 hard courts. The **Flamingo Tennis Center** (Map pp48-9; ☎ 305-673-7761; 1000 12th St, South Beach) has 19 clay courts that are open to the public; but beware of the zoolike crowds on evenings and weekends. Two other great options are the **Salvadore Park Tennis Center** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 305-460-5333; 1120 Andalusia Ave, Coral Gables) and the **Tropical Park Tennis Center** (off Map pp100-1; ☎ 305-873-2230; 7900 SW 40th St, Coral Gables).

Golfers also have many options. Check out the lovely 1925 **Biltmore Donald Ross Golf Course** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 305-460-5364; 1210 Anastasia Ave, Coral Gables), designed by the golfer of that name, which boasts the company of the Biltmore Hotel. **Doral Golf Course** (Map pp44-5; ☎ 305-592-2000; 4400 NW 87th Ave) is highly rated, which may explain why it's difficult to get in and also why it's the home of the PGA Ford Championship. The wealthy can blow their wad here on golf courses that follow in the path of (literally)

the Masters. For easier access, try the **Crandon Golf Course** (Map p92; ☎ 305-361-9129; 6700 Crandon Blvd, Key Biscayne), overlooking the bay from its perch on Key Biscayne; or the **Haulover Golf Course** (Map pp58-9; ☎ 305-940-6719; 10,800 Collins Ave, Haulover), a nine-hole, par-three course that's great for beginners.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Ultimate players have a lot of love for each other all over the world, and here they can express that emotion on miles of white sand beach. Check www.miamiultimatefrisbee.org for more details; free-to-join beach games are currently held at 6:30pm and 7:00pm (arrive at 6:15pm) on the beach (right) side of Miami Beach, between 14th and 15th Aves. Bring a white and a dark shirt to play.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

Whenever you visit Miami, you're sure to find something worth watching. Catch football in fall, basketball in winter, baseball in spring and jai alai pretty much anytime in between. The prices listed are estimates; there are plenty of websites (www.coasttocoasttickets.com is a good start) where you can buy everything from \$10 nosebleed seats to \$10,000 luxury box berths.

FOOTBALL

MIAMI DOLPHINS

☎ 305-620-2578; www.miamidolphins.com; **Dolphin Stadium**, 2269 NW 199th St, North Dade; **admission \$29-700**; 🗓 **season Aug-Dec**
American football games are a great place to see the national traits of excess and competitiveness on parade. Also, the game rocks. 'Dol-fans' are respectably crazy about their team, even if a Super Bowl showing has evaded them since 1985. Games are wildly popular and the Dolphins are painfully successful, in that they always raise fans' hopes but never quite fulfill them. Superbowl 44 will be held at Dolphin stadium in 2010.

If you're a real football fanatic, you can watch preseason practices near Fort Lauderdale. Take I-95 or Florida's Turnpike to I-595 west to the University Dr exit. Turn left at SW 30th St and make another left. The training facility is half a mile down on the right.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HURRICANES

☎ 800-462-2637; www.hurricanesports.com; admission \$25-45

On November 10, 2007, the 'Canes, one of the most successful college football franchises of the past 25 years, were annihilated 48-0 by the University of Virginia, the worst home loss in the team's history. It was their last game in **Orange Bowl Stadium**, which was perhaps mercifully demolished two months later (they now play in the Dolphin Stadium). For the Hurricanes, once titans of university football, the slow decline began in 2004, culminating in 2007's abysmal losing season. But the team's green-and-orange army isn't going to surrender any time soon, and the insane excitement of game day is still worth experiencing.

BASKETBALL

MIAMI HEAT Map pp66-7

☎ 786-777-4328; www.nba.com/heat; American Airlines Arena, 601 Biscayne Blvd, Downtown; admission \$10-375; 🗓️ season Nov-Apr
The Heat used to be so hot (forgive us). First: Pat Riley took over in 2003. Then they scored the first three draft picks of 2004-05 and, finally, won an NBA championship in 2006. Since then, the team has been trying to recapture that magic momentum by finding the perfect match to round out the driving game of Dwyane Wade and Shaquille O'Neal.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HURRICANES

☎ 800-462-2637; www.hurricanesports.com; BankUnited Center, University of Miami; admission \$20
Catch the beloved college Hurricanes shooting hoops at the BankUnited Center at the **University of Miami** (Map pp100-1).

BASEBALL

MIAMI MARLINS Map pp44-5

☎ 305-626-7400; www.marlins.mlb.com; Dolphin Stadium, 2269 NW 199th St, Opa-Locka; admission \$4-55; 🗓️ season May-Sep

Oh my, the Marlins. In 10 years they won two World Series, but after 2003 things began to fall apart; at one stage Alex Rodriguez was making more scratch than the entire team salary roll. During 2006, when it seemed like their own stadium would never be more than a pipedream, the 'Fish' started thinking of packing their bags for San Antonio, but commissioners have finally approved plans for a new stadium, set to be complete by 2010. In the meantime, games have been held in – where else? – Dolphin Stadium.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HURRICANES

Map pp100-1

☎ 800-462-2637; www.hurricanesports.com; Mark Light Stadium, University of Miami, 6201 San Amaro Dr, Coral Gables; admission \$7-15
The Hurricane's un-pro baseball can often please when the Marlins disappoint.

HOCKEY

FLORIDA PANTHERS off Map pp44-5

☎ 954-835-8000; www.floridapanthers.com; Office Depot Center, 1 Panther Pkwy, Sunrise; admission \$17-117; 🗓️ season mid-Oct-mid-Apr
That's right: ice hockey in Miami. The Panthers almost grasped the Stanley Cup in 1996, but since then they've gone steadily downhill, becoming one of the worst teams in the National Hockey League (NHL). Still, watching a game at least gets you out of the heat. And they could always have a comeback, right?

MIAMI MARLIN MADNESS

Ten years. Ten years of backbiting, arguing, begging and cajoling, of almost losing the team to San Antonio and Virginia Beach. Ten years and 70% of an optimistically projected \$619-million bill, which will likely be covered (no matter what city officials say) by shuffling public works funds. Put it all together and Miami will get to keep the Florida Marlins (**above**), rename them the Miami Marlins and house them in Major League Baseball's newest stadium, set to replace the vanquished Orange Bowl in Little Havana. The city of Miami is hoping the new stadium will anchor south Downtown's resurgence, bring baseball fans streaming into the city, and further solidify Miami's position as capital of South Florida. Fans in Broward county, pissed off about the name change, will have to swallow their bitterness. And baseball goes on in South Florida, in a new, air-conditioned, retractable-domed 37,000-seat stadium, which, while small for an MLB venue, may be roomy considering only 375 fans (375!!) came out to a Marlins-Nationals game in September 2007.

Seriously.

MIAMI JAI ALAI

Jai alai (pronounced 'high aligh'), which roughly translates from Spanish as 'merry festival,' is a fascinating and dangerous game. Something of a cross between racquetball and lacrosse, it originated in the Basque region of the Pyrenees in the 17th century, and was introduced to Miami in 1924. The *fronton* (arena) where the games are held is the oldest in the States, having been built just two years after the game was introduced. How is it played? Well, players hurl a *pelota* (a small ball of virgin rubber that's wrapped in goat skin and so powerful it can shatter bullet-proof glass) at more than 170mph to their opponents, who try to catch it with the *cesta* – a woven basket that's custom-made from Spanish chestnut and reeds from the Pyrenees – that's attached to their glove. The game is held in a round robin, and the object is to toss the *pelota* against the front wall of the court with so much speed that the opposition cannot catch it or return it in the fly or first bounce. Audiences wager on the lightning-fast games, said to be the speediest sport on earth.

Catch the action for yourself at **Miami Jai Alai** (Map pp44–5; ☎ 305-633-6400; 3500 NW 37th Ave; admission \$1–5; 🕒 matches noon–5pm Wed–Mon, 7pm–midnight Mon, Fri & Sat). It's great fun to watch these guys whack around their *pelota* at lightning speed – and even more exciting to wager bets on who will win.

HORSE RACING

CALDER RACE COURSE off Map pp44–5

☎ 305-625-1311; www.calderracecourse.com;

21,001 NW 27th Ave; admission \$2

With live races from May to December, this 1971 track, up toward Hollywood, hosts the Festival of the Sun Derby and always has simulcasts (TV broadcasts) of national races.

GULFSTREAM PARK off Map pp44–5

☎ 954-454-7000; www.gulfstreampark.com; 901 S Federal Hwy, Hallandale; admission \$2–4

Catch live races and simulcasts at this classic track/casino.

MOTOR SPORTS

HOMESTEAD MIAMI SPEEDWAY

off Map pp44–5

☎ 305-230-7223; www.homesteadmiamispeedway.com;

1 Speedway Blvd, Homestead
If you want to see the sport that truly gets blue collar Miami going, drive out to this \$50-million racing center built in 1995, which plays host to National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (Nascar) and Winston Cup races. The *New York Times* once quipped that it would be hard to imagine anyone in Homestead wanting to see something coming at them at 200mph after Hurricane Andrew, but people do. Go figure.

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