



GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700

Miami, Florida 33131

305/539-3084, Fax 305/539-2911

<http://www.MiamiAndBeaches.com>

E-mail: Media@MiamiAndBeaches.com

Contact: Media Relations, 305/539-3084, 800/955-3646 (U.S./Canada)

SHOP TILL YOU DROP IN MIAMI: FROM TOP DESIGNER BOUTIQUES TO VINTAGE COLLECTIBLES

(MIAMI) – A far cry from the days when a half bushel of grapefruit and a *Greetings from Miami Beach* snow globe were de rigeur tourist purchases, Miami has become a red hot retail destination: a tropical treasure trove of trendsetting fashions, cutting-edge home décor and great values. Serious shoppers from around the world travel to Miami to check out designer showrooms displaying the latest styles and innovations, and visit funky boutiques trumpeting homegrown talent.

As celebrities and fashion-savvy editors fall in love with South Beach all over again, a shopping renaissance is underway. A steady stream of trendy new boutiques and stores continue to open along the pedestrian-only Lincoln Road and in the Collins Avenue fashion district. *Lucky Magazine*, the glossy that serves as the bible to those who view shopping as a calling, labels South Beach “a great shopping option with the same kinds of stores you find in New York or Los Angeles.”

Lincoln Road's eclectic mix of funky boutiques, restaurants and al fresco cafés now includes such hot brands as Diesel, Earl Jeans, Steve Madden, L'Occitane, and Kiehl's. In its first heyday in the 1950s and 1960s, "the Road" was known as the Fifth Avenue of the South: stomping grounds for jewelry-laden matrons shopping at Saks Fifth Avenue and Harry Winston. Today, Lincoln Road serves as the true heartbeat of Miami Beach, as evidenced by the constant parade of shoppers, rollerbladers, parents pushing baby strollers, and people walking dogs and making the scene.

The beautifully landscaped promenade features designs by renowned architect Morris Lapidus and is home to national retail chains and homegrown boutiques showcasing local designers, jewelry and other one-of-a-kind items. Early pioneers that have stayed on through the Road's revitalization include Brownes & Co/The Beauty

Lounge, a day spa and beauty emporium that is a favorite of fashion editors, models and celebrities for hard-to-find beauty lines and beyond-bliss pedicures. Books and Books offers bestsellers and brownies, while BASE features cool internationally designed, locally created fashions and the hottest world dance and house music. The Dog Bar, just off of Lincoln Road, features an astonishing array of accessories and tasty treats for Fido.

Every Sunday, a farmer's market blooms along Lincoln Road, offering fresh produce, flowers, homemade breads, orchids and other delectable items. Lincoln Road is also the site of a seasonal Antiques and Collectibles Market, which operates every other Sunday from October through May. Here bargain hunters and savvy collectors can pick up retro fashions, 60s furniture and just maybe, the find of a lifetime.

In the heart of the Art Deco District, on Collins and Washington Avenue between 5th and 9th Streets, lies South Beach's bustling fashion district, a collection of hip designer stores including Club Monaco, Nicole Miller, Arden B., Intermix and Armani Exchange. Funky, youthful fashions are the rule at Urban Outfitters, Benetton and Kenneth Cole, while Uncle Sam's Music has been providing the music and gift items that are an essential part of South Florida's lifestyle since 1984. On nearby Ocean Drive, intrepid shoppers will be rewarded with several interesting shops and one of the best people watching spots in the world.

Miami Design District

Another area that has been percolating with activity in recent years is the Miami Design District. With a synergistic blend of art, architecture and design, the district is a compelling 18 blocks of interior design showrooms, home furnishings and furniture studios that are open to the public. Top names like Holly Hunt, Knoll, Tui Pranich and Waterworks are all strolling distance from one another, while hip restaurants have sprung up on every block and excellent art galleries including Casas Reigner, Berenice Steinbaum and Adamar Fine Art are all part of this rejuvenated design community. A newcomer to the area is Turchin Love & Light Jewelry, which sells a line of one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces that have adorned celebrities ranging from Beyonce to David Caruso.

Miracle Mile

Yet another renaissance in the making is the rebirth of downtown Coral Gables. Traditionally a tranquil shopping and business district, Miracle Mile has been transformed into a bustling, hip Mecca for shopping, dining and entertainment. More than 170

designer boutiques and specialty stores now line the boulevard. With nearly two dozen bridal boutiques, wedding cake galleries and invitation stores, Miracle Mile has also become a preferred shopping destination for brides from all parts of the world.

A Mall For All Seasons

The **Village of Merrick Park** (www.VillageofMerrickPark.com), 800,000 square feet of high-end retailers and restaurants in Coral Gables, illustrates just how much shopping has become part of the Miami experience. Beautifully landscaped with fountains, tropical foliage and serene gardens perfect for reflecting and relaxing between purchases, Merrick Park is home to 115 world class shops and restaurants, with anchors Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom and exclusive international designer boutiques including Gucci, Carolina Herrera and Roberto Cavalli.

A selection of fabulous restaurants and cafés enhances the overall experience. Elemis Day Spa, a world-renowned palace of pampering with locations in London and Hong Kong, has opened its first South Florida location here, a 7,000-square-foot day spa. The innovative Veranda Home Collection is an area of the mall that puts all of Merrick Park's elegant home furnishings stores in one comfortable design setting.

The prestigious **Bal Harbour Shops** (www.BalHarbourShops.com), located one block from the ocean at the northern end of Miami Beach, set the standard for upper echelon shopping centers when it opened in 1965, with a reputation for the finest quality shops and products. Home to the first Neiman Marcus department store outside of Texas, the Bal Harbour Shops rewrote the book on retailing with its beautiful out-of-doors garden setting and top-notch couture tenants. One of Miami's premiere tourist attractions, according to industry bible *Womens Wear Daily*, Bal Harbour Shops is perennially ranked one of the most productive shopping centers in the U.S. With a collection of exclusive and luxurious retail stores that would be hard to find side by side almost anywhere else in the world outside of Paris, Milan or New York. The Shops' directory reads like a who's who of the elite names in fashion and jewelry: Bulgari, Cartier, Harry Winston, Chanel, Gucci, Prada, Louis Vuitton, Tiffany, Fendi, Gianni Versace and dozens more.

Two other Miami-Dade shopping centers are hot destinations for avid shoppers. South Miami's **Dadeland Mall** (www.Simon.com) is a traditional enclosed shopping mall featuring an excellent retail mix of 185 stores. At the opposite, northern end of Miami-Dade, **Aventura Mall** (www.ShopAventuraMall.com) has recently completed a comprehensive renovation project that brings a fresh and contemporary look to the

mall, as well as the addition of Nordstrom and new three-level, 232,000-square-foot wing of new stores and restaurants. The largest super regional mall in South Florida, Aventura Mall currently features six anchor department stores, 250 upscale shops and restaurants, a 24-screen theater and a full slate of year-round events including a weekly farmer's market, children's activities, fashion shows and fundraisers.

Savings is the lure at **Dolphin Mall** (www.ShopDolphinMall.com), located just five miles west of Miami International Airport. A mélange of reasonably priced specialty stores and bargain outlets, Dolphin Mall has been designed to reflect Miami's rich multicultural heritage. Divided into *zonas* which group similar stores and restaurants together, Dolphin Mall is a breeze for shoppers with an agenda – restaurants and entertainment are clustered in Las Ramblas; in Playa, you'll find South Beach style shopping for casual apparel; while chic styles are concentrated in Moda. **Prime Factory Outlets** (www.PrimeOutlets.com) in Florida City is worth the drive. About 35 minutes south of downtown Miami, bargain seekers will find Nike, Gap Outlet, Samsonite Factory Outlet and other brand name stores in a colorful Caribbean-style marketplace chock full of great deals.

Shopping can be a guilty pleasure when you're vacationing in a tropical paradise, but many of Miami's shopping destinations are picturesque open-air affairs, offering visitors plenty of blue skies and sunshine. **The Falls** (www.ShopTheFalls.com) is filled with quiet lagoons and wooden walkways, while the **Shops at Sunset Place** (www.Simon.com) has majestic waterfalls, cascading fountains, a dramatic grand staircase and even 35-foot Banyan trees. **Bayside Marketplace** (www.BaysideMarketplace.com), downtown Miami's waterfront shopping/dining and entertainment center, is the gateway to over 100 shops, great live music and fabulous food and drink. **Mary Brickell Village**, a new open-air lifestyle complex in the heart of downtown Miami's Brickell area, began opening in stages during 2007, offering upscale boutiques, signature restaurants and an array of neighborhood services. **CocoWalk** (www.GalleryAtCocowalk.com) and the nearby **Shops at Mayfair** offer a mix of exclusive specialty shops, dining and entertainment – a perfect compliment to the quirky boutiques and cafes that line the streets of artsy Coconut Grove.

Farmers, Fleas and Vintage Miami

Visitors to Miami who enjoy strolling open-air markets for fresh produce, organic products and handmade textiles, clothing and other items can find a farmer's market in

just about every neighborhood throughout the city. And those who just can't resist a bargain will exult in flea markets that offer a potpourri of new and used products.

The **Upper Eastside Green Market** at Legion Park is adored by market goers including chefs Michael Schwartz and Michelle Bernstein. Nearly 30 vendors are present selling fresh local produce like citrus, avocados, and peppers. You can also buy homemade delectables like honey and jam, or baked goods such as Italian bread and cookies. There are even chef demonstrations and workshops for budding gardeners. The **Coconut Grove Organic Farmer's Market**, which runs on Saturday mornings, qualifies as the oldest and most traditional of Miami's outdoor markets, with a mouth-watering array of local produce and ready-to-eat delicacies. South Beach's **Espanola Way**, a two-block stretch of Mediterranean-style storefronts closes to traffic on Sunday afternoons as vendors offer wares ranging from incense to sunglasses and include imported goods from Latin America and India. Each Saturday morning from 8 to 1, mid-January to late March, some 25 produce and plant vendors sell herbs, fruits, fresh-squeezed juices, chutneys, cakes, and muffins at the **Coral Gables Farmers Market** in Merrick Park. With all the familiar trappings of a farmers' market, **Lincoln Road Farmers Market** is a must-see event on Sundays before or after visiting the Antique and Collectibles Market. It brings local produce and bakery vendors and often features plant workshops, art sales, and children's activities. This is a good place to pick up live orchids, too! Other lively markets can be found in North Beach, downtown Miami, Aventura Mall and The Falls in Kendall.

Bargain hunters head to the flea markets, discovering a plethora of diverse merchandise in festive, fun environments that reflect Miami's multicultural population. At **Flagler Race Track in Little Havana**, more than 500 vendors sell secondhand items, books, clothes, shoes, toys, antiques, furniture, tools, housewares and good old-fashioned junk. Visitors can sample Cuban, Caribbean and American food and buy fresh produce from farmers. The **Opa Locka-Hialeah Flea Market** is the granddaddy of all South Florida flea markets. Open daily, the market features 1,200 dealers selling everything imaginable.

Heralded as one of the last great cities for vintage designer clothing by *Sex and the City* costume designer Patricia Field, Miami boasts a great collection of vintage clothing boutiques. In-the-know fashionistas snap up classic Pucci and Courreges at groovy shops like Miami Twice, Fly Boutique, C. Madeleine and Beatnix Vintage Clothing. Those who like their furniture aged would be wise to travel to Homestead's Main Street Antique District, home to a plethora of quaint shops and cafés.

The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) is an independent not-for-profit sales and marketing organization whose mission is to attract visitors to Greater Miami and the Beaches for leisure, business and conventions. For a vacation guide, visit our website at www.MiamiAndBeaches.com or call 1-888-76-Miami (US/Canada only) or 305-447-7777. To reach the GMCVB offices dial 305-539-3000. Meeting planners may call 1-800-933-8448 (US/Canada only) or 305-539-3071 or visit www.MiamiMeetings.com.

###

Updated: April 2009