

Volume 7

THE PINK PALM



The LGBTQ+ Travel Insider for Greater Miami & Miami Beach

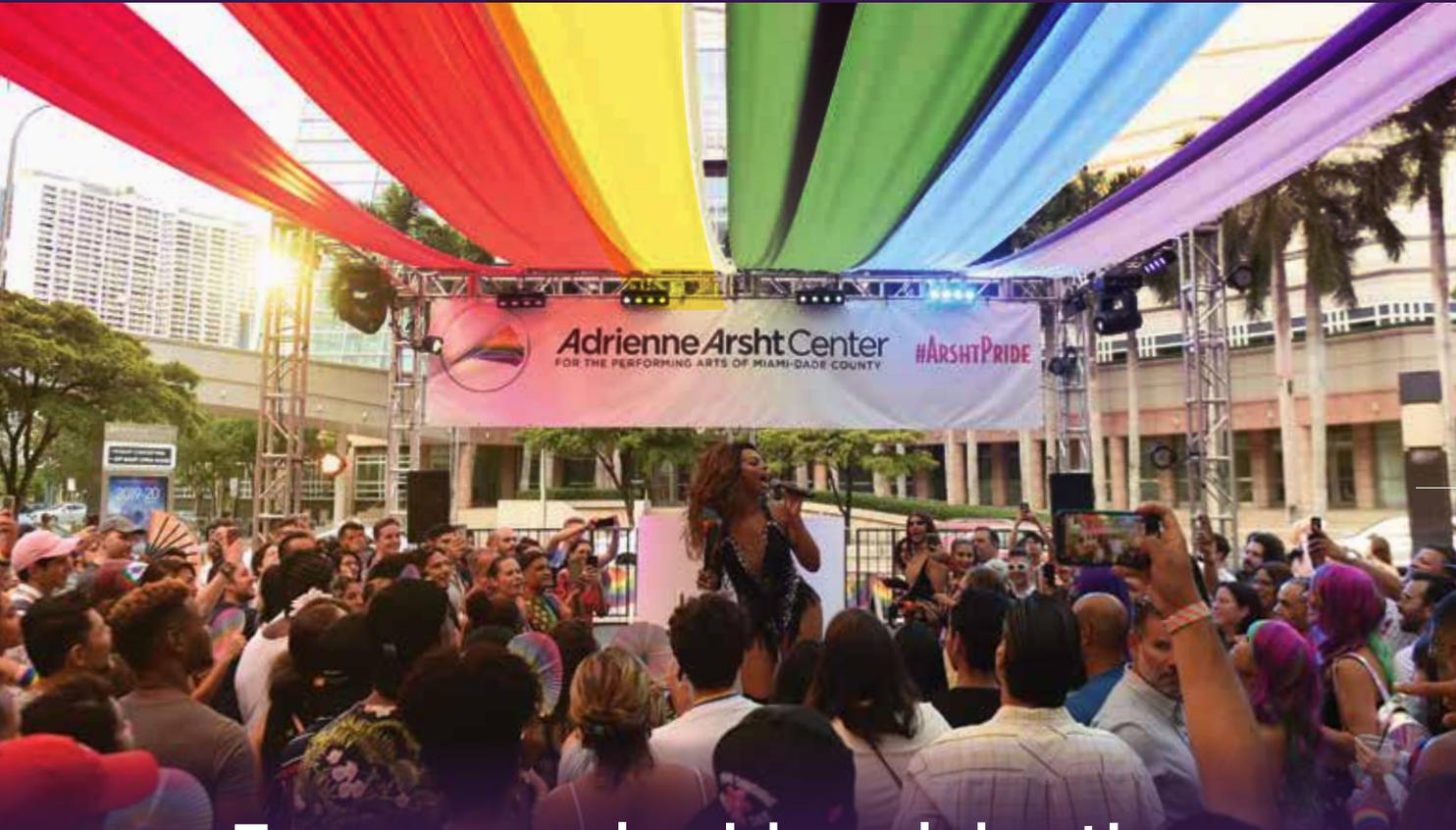


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Photo by Christopher Collins



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Photo by @el_danrios

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WELCOME...

We are back with Volume 7 of The Pink Palm. It's been a fun year so far in Greater Miami & Miami Beach, and as we get ready for summer, we wanted to make sure you have this in hand as you plan your Miami getaway. In this issue we'll get down and boogie with DJ Hottpants, the beloved DJ behind some of our most popular LGBTQ+ parties and events. We'll also take a deep dive into the diverse and eclectic queer art scene in Greater Miami & Miami Beach, and discover six artists who are making their impact known. And for our fabulous Ls, we've updated our Local Lesbian Insider serving up countless reasons to make you wish you were here with us in sunny Miami! To close it out, we bring you everything you need to know about Greater Miami & Miami Beach's gay nightlife scene in our feature, Miami's Hottest Gay Bars & Nightclubs. So start planning your next visit to Miami... and see you soon!

Stop by the LGBT Visitor Center for local and visitor information.

LGBT Visitor Center

1130 Washington Ave., 1st Floor North, Miami Beach, FL 33139

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Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 A.M. – 6 P.M. • Sat & Sun: 11 A.M. – 4 P.M.



The Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (MDGLCC) is the largest not-for-profit corporation in the county for gay and lesbian businesses. MDGLCC offers the Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification by training and certifying hospitality service professionals on issues related to gender and orientation, and giving them tools to respond appropriately to all people. This is essential for creating environments where all visitors and employees are welcome.

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For a list of Pink Flamingo Certified Hotels and Businesses in Greater Miami & Miami Beach, please visit GayBizMiami.com

THE PINK PALM

The LGBTQ+ Travel Insider for
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The Pink Palm is produced by the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau with the support of the Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.



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For information about Greater Miami & Miami Beach, please visit
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DJ Hottpants

Offers an Insider's Guide to Miami's LGBTQ+ Music Scene!

The legendary DJ Hottpants talks about his career, what inspires him, and Greater Miami & Miami Beach's thriving queer music scene.

by Gino R. Campodónico

If you've ever danced all night in Greater Miami & Miami Beach, there's a good chance DJ Hottpants was behind the decks. Born and raised in South Miami, Daniel Blair – better known as DJ Hottpants – is an icon in the local LGBTQ+ music scene. He regularly spins at marquee events around the destination, including Miami Beach Pride, Wigwood Miami and Wynwood Pride, and is featured in regular weekly residences at hotspots such as Coyo Taco in Coral Gables, Dogfish Head Brewery and Gramps in Wynwood, and Hôtel Gaythering in Miami Beach. Mixing guilty pop pleasures with genres as diverse as freestyle, R&B, dance and electronic music, DJ Hottpants knows how to get a party started. Among other accolades he's received, in 2019 he was named "Best DJ in Miami" in *South Florida Gay News*.

We sat down with DJ Hottpants for a deep dive into his artistic approach and his love for Miami. Here are some highlights from our conversation.

MUSICAL INSPIRATION + GETTING "SEEN ON THE SCENE"

Miami's diversity and cultural melting pot has had a profound impact on Blair's life and his approach to music. "I was very lucky to be raised in the magnet programs of Miami-Dade County Public Schools," he says. "It did more than let me try my hand at different artistic pursuits – it

allowed me to meet talented students from across the county. When I left Miami for college, I missed the diversity of the city and the amazing people who informed the person I'd become. I really looked forward to moving back after graduation."

Growing up, DJ Hottpants was surrounded by the vibrant music of the city. "The first cassettes I remember owning were The Beach Boys, The Bangles, Cyndi Lauper and Phil Collins. When I first started DJ-ing, I wanted to play all of the music I heard on the school bus growing up," says Blair. "I made a deep dive researching the freestyle, booty and pop music genres starting in the 1980s. Since then, I've continued to research music history and expand my knowledge of other styles."

After a year of being a local Miami club and party promoter, Blair got his first big DJ break at a local venue. "My friends at Poplife were about to open I/O Lounge and asked me to promote a night there in 2003," he says. "To keep costs down, I hired myself as a DJ. After several months of DJ-ing, I got asked by other promoters to DJ (and get paid). That was when I figured I could actually give it a shot. I would watch other local DJs like DeeJay Smeejay, Induce, and DJ LeSpam spin with vinyl, and I copied their techniques as much as I could."

THE STORY BEHIND THOSE HOT PANTS

DJ Hottpants knows how to get your attention. His famous go-to attire for any DJ performance or appearance is a pair of bright hot pants, a vintage concert or pop diva tee, legwarmers and a headband. "I started wearing them as a costume that harkened back to my childhood, and was an homage to Kylie Minogue, Olivia Newton-John and Richard Simmons," says Blair. "It was all an elaborate ruse to get into clubs wearing shorts and VERY functional headbands."

MIAMI'S THRIVING MUSIC CULTURE

Music is a universal language that brings people together, and Miami is known for its thriving music scene and spirited nightlife. Miami's LGBTQ+ music scene specifically continues to evolve. "In the 1990s, I associated it with South Beach club culture," he says. "Now, I am so thankful that the Miami LGBTQ+ music scene includes almost every genre, including the talents of Jay Thomas, The State Of, DROZE and Robbie Elias just to name a few. I enjoy seeing the many facets of our culture come together, and really enjoy representing my little spot in the community. I'm here to be the local 'redhead bear' who loves music, short shorts, kitsch and dancing to a wide variety of music."

"I hope that someone who has heard my sets got an enjoyable sense memory from a song they had not heard in a very long time or experienced the joy of discovering a new song," says Blair. "I rarely know what I'm going to play during a set, and I never know in what order I'll play my selections."



What's his secret to getting everyone on the dance floor? He recommends Deee-Lite and Lizzo as personal favorites. If he could pick one song that represents Miami to him, it's "Domino" by Jessie J. "That song always makes me feel sexy and ready to party... so I guess that's how it's like in Miami!"

When he's not spinning on the ones and twos, Blair can be found at Sweat Records in Little Haiti, one of Miami's premier independent music stores and event spaces. "I am proud to work at Sweat Records," he says. "I DJ'd the grand opening and have DJ'd there at least once a year ever since. My first job was at a Spec's Music store, so I've come full circle. My favorite thing about working there is talking with other music lovers and helping people discover their new favorites." 🌸



To find out where
DJ Hottpants
is playing, listen to music
mixes or order swag,
check out DJHottpants.com

DJ Hottpants'

Mini-Guide to Greater Miami & Miami Beach

Photo by Monica McGiven

FAVE PLACE TO DANCE

Gramps. The covered patio with its multitude of oscillating fans is my favorite place to move my booty.



FAVE PLACE TO LISTEN TO MUSIC

My car. If I'm not listening to my latest downloads, I'm tuning in to WVUM 90.5 FM, which I've been listening to since high school for new finds in music. For live music, the North Beach Bandshell is a treat on a lovely night.



FAVE RESTAURANT

Blue Collar in the MiMo neighborhood. Consistently fantastic!



FAVE LGBTQ+ PLACE



Hôtel Gaythering. I always have a good time there and they have a great lineup of weekly activities.

FAVE PLACE TO RECOMMEND TO VISITORS



Coral Castle. I am a little obsessed with the mystery of how it was built, but more so about the man who built it. It also has amazing photo ops!

FAVE HIDDEN GEM

The Biltmore Bar. My go-to spot for a classic sidecar.





QUEER ARTISTS TO WATCH IN MIAMI

by **Gino R. Campodónico**

LEFT TO RIGHT:
Carlos Betancourt,
Rev. Houston R. Cypress
(Otter Clan),
GeoVanna Gonzalez,
Ali X Miranda,
Najja Moon,
José Rafael Perozo



Art is all around us. Especially in Greater Miami & Miami Beach. As a hub for cultural innovation, Miami has become a go-to spot for locals and visitors alike to discover both established and emerging artists. Marquee events such as Art Basel Miami Beach, Art Wynwood, the Coconut Grove Art Festival and many more draw thousands of art lovers each year.

Although there's progress still to be made, the local art scene embraces the destination's diverse queer community, offering a welcoming space for queer-identifying artists. In fact, Art Gaysel at Hôtel Gaythering in Miami Beach has become a Miami Art Week mainstay every December, and popular local art spaces such as The Bass, the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), Young Arts Gallery, Locust Projects and the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami regularly showcase LGBTQ+ artists.

We spoke with six local queer artists about what Greater Miami & Miami Beach means to them and about their approach to their art. Here are some highlights from these conversations.



CARLOS BETANCOURT

Carlos Betancourt is a well-known multidisciplinary artist who has won numerous awards and grants. His artworks explore his own experiences, nature, the environment and issues of communication and identity. "Ultimately, I am a storyteller, and I like my artwork to have poetry, mystery, energy and magic, and to be as authentic as possible," says Betancourt. Miami has played a major role in Betancourt's career, and he believes in supporting the destination. "Miami is fascinating. There is plenty for everybody and each individual's interest. Visiting artist studios is probably the most direct way to be immersed in Miami's vibrant and diverse arts community," he says.



REV. HOUSTON R. CYPRESS

A member of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, Rev. Houston R. Cypress (Otter Clan) is a queer poet, artist, environmental activist and ordained minister. Through his organization, Love the Everglades Movement, Cypress has dedicated his life to restoring the Everglades ecosystem by raising awareness and organizing positive community engagement. "I want to create community and encourage conversation and help people connect with the natural world, especially in places throughout the Greater Everglades," says Cypress. He is a mixed-media artist, using a variety of media including written and spoken word, and visual works such as photos and videos. "Being Two-Spirit, queer, gay and Miccosukee definitely influences my art. I've learned to heal the traumas and celebrate the joys of my identities," Cypress says.



Houston Cypress/dNASAb





Photo by Zachary Balber



Photo by Najja Moon

GEOVANNA GONZALEZ

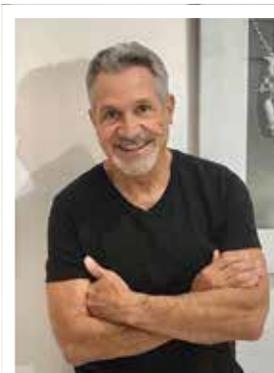
Splitting her time between Miami and Berlin, sculptor and curator GeoVanna Gonzalez explores gender and identity in her work. "Being queer is part of my identity and my identity is inevitably embedded in my work," she says. Her impressive pieces regularly use a variety of materials, including aluminum, steel, wood, drywall, plexiglass, acrylic paint and more. She describes her artistic style as "elegant and poetic," incorporating "clean lines and hard edges." "Many things inspire me to make art, but most personally, experiences I have had, as well as things that I read and research, my community, architecture and our natural landscape," says Gonzalez. "Miami has an amazing community of artists and thinkers and it's important for them to receive support so that they can continue to have a sustainable practice in Miami."



Photo by Jorge Gonzalez

ALI X MIRANDA

Born in Cuba, Ali X Miranda resides in Miami and has exhibited his art in solo and group shows in galleries around the world. Working primarily with photos and videos, Miranda's art is explicitly queer. He is best known for his erotic nudes featuring muscular male bodies, and he describes his artistic style as "surreal and expressionist." "I believe everyone should support all communities regardless of gender, color and nationality... art makes us free," says Miranda. He recommends going to local brunches and cabarets for those looking to immerse themselves in Miami's LGBTQ+ artistic community.



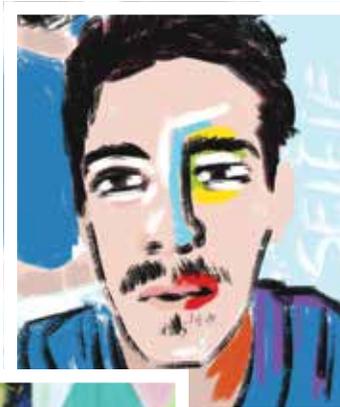


NAJJA MOON

Born and raised in Durham, North Carolina, Najja Moon moved to Miami in 2009. "In my visual arts practice, I use drawing and text to explore the intersections of queer identity, the body and movement, Black culture and familiar relations both personal and communal," says Moon. Her work, which includes drawings, sculpture and public art, has been shown in art spaces across Greater Miami & Miami Beach.

JOSÉ RAFAEL PEROZO

Originally from Venezuela, José Rafael Perozo is a mixed-media visual artist who now lives in Miami. "The queer will always be present in my work because I am queer. All my work is autobiographical; almost always based on personal experiences, relationships, contexts and situations," he says. "I believe that my work changes according to the medium in which I work. I make everything from drawings to videos, through embroidery, sewing, painting and photography." When he's not working on his art, Perozo enjoys going to the beach and visiting Miami's museums. "Miami has very good and important collections. The de la Cruz Collection has incredible works by one of my favorite artists, Félix González-Torres. I also like the Rubell Museum a lot." 🌸



THE LOCAL LESBIAN INSIDER

Greater Miami & Miami Beach is a “wish-you-were-here” social media star. But nothing beats it IRL.

by **A.M. De la Torre**



People visit Greater Miami & Miami Beach to unwind, celebrate and bask in the destination’s beauty. For women who love women, Miami offers countless reasons to make you glad you’re here – and queer – every day of the year.

DAYTIME’S PLAYTIME, BEACHSIDE

The beaches here are world-class, and at the official LGBTQ+ beach at 12th Street and Ocean Drive in Miami Beach, you can begin your day like a sun goddess. Follow the rainbow-striped street and find a sandy spot facing our warm, aquamarine waters, then relax and laze away the day among family.

GET THE 411 FROM LOCALS

One of the first in the country, the LGBT Visitor Center is a few blocks west of the gay beach. Situated within Miami Beach’s historic Old City Hall building (an attraction in itself) – you can pop in here to get the latest on local happenings and hangouts.

HIPSTER OR BOHO STYLE “GAYBORHOODS”

West of Miami Beach, Wynwood is known for its street art and galleries, breweries, restaurants and hipster vibe. Colorful and buzzy at night, a daytime visit spotlights this urban neighborhood’s casual, urbane side.

Heading south and delving into Miami’s past, Coconut Grove is a lush neighborhood along Biscayne Bay that’s always been a home to originals. Bahamians and bohemians, hippies and artists created a vibrant area tolerant of all kinds of lifestyles. Sidewalk cafes and unique boutiques attract LGBTQ+ locals who come to “the Grove” for brunch, shopping, romantic al fresco dining and the annual Coconut Grove Arts Festival.

GET READY FOR A NIGHT OUT (OR A STYLISH NIGHT IN)

Some destinations make it hard for lesbians to feel welcome. But feeling at ease is a breeze in Miami, and even more so at two LGBTQ+ fave hotels.



AxelBeach Miami in South Beach is part of an international hotel chain focusing on the LGBTQ+ community (and anyone without prejudice) and features an Art Deco-style exterior, posh interiors and several bars, including a poolside bar that hosts weekly LGBTQ+ parties.

The Vagabond Hotel, across Biscayne Bay in Miami, is a woman-owned boutique hotel in the trendy Biscayne corridor that spotlights Miami Modernism (MiMo) architecture. It has a fun, retro-luxe vibe channeling its glamorous past as a Rat Pack-era hangout, plus designer and tech-savvy finishes. It also offers a laid-back poolside bar and a Mediterranean restaurant.

STAY HYDRATED AT LGBTQ+ FRIENDLY BARS

Miami is keen to cater to the queer community's thirst at bars such as Bar Gaythering (hotel bar with drinking and dancing), Palace (home of a legendary drag brunch) and R House (restaurant with drag shows). Gramps in Wynwood is a no-judgment zone that fits into many categories (as does its diverse crowd) with weekly jazz/indie/dance bands, an outdoor patio, and a Thursday "Double Stubble"

queer night merging drag, bingo and music. Although it's not considered a gay bar, Blackbird Ordinary's Tuesday ladies' night has become a low-key (and low-cost) lesbian hangout, appealing for its dive bar/dance club atmosphere and drink specials.

LGBTQ+ EVENTS IN MIAMI

Miami is legendary for its energetic parties. You can enjoy lesbian-focused soirees at trending venues, with awesome DJs and entertainment organized by Pandora Events. The wife & wife-owned AmaviMiami combines great times with good deeds, with events at locations throughout Greater Miami & Miami Beach that often give back to local LGBTQ causes and organizations. The non-profit Aqua Foundation for Women creates opportunities for community-minded LGBTQ+ women to come together, have fun and do good.

BEAUTY AND BRAINS: CULTURE THRIVES IN MIAMI

All year long, Miami stimulates the creative spirit. O Cinema (located in the same building as the LGBT Visitor Center) features art film screenings, with films for LGBTQ+ audiences very well represented. The yearly OUTShine Film Festival offers a weeklong celluloid celebration of the LGBTQ+ experience. Performance art stands proud, too, during the annual Out in the Tropics series featuring LGBTQ+ artists in music, dance, comedy and film at venues throughout Greater Miami & Miami Beach. With its bayfront views and thought-provoking art exhibitions, the Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) elevates any experience, be it lunch, drinks, a first date, or even a marriage proposal.

MAKE A PLAN TO VISIT MIAMI

Greater Miami & Miami Beach is special. The feeling is palpable. Whenever you're here, whether it's during large annual LGBTQ+ events or at any other time of year, know that the rainbow-colored carpet is always rolled out for you. There's plenty of fun to be had every ordinary, extraordinary Miami day. 🌈





MIAMI'S HOTTEST GAY BARS & NIGHTCLUBS

Check out Greater Miami & Miami Beach's hottest gay bars and nightclubs here, with everything from drag queen brunches and gay dance parties to fun bars at LGBTQ+ hotels.

by Shayne Benowitz

Greater Miami & Miami Beach has long been a world-class destination for LGBTQ+ travelers in search of gay nightlife. If you're looking for a night out at one of Miami's hot gay bars or nightclubs, you have plenty to choose from. Whether it's a drag show on Ocean Drive, boozie bingo at a lobby bar inside a gay hotel, or a late night on the dance floor of South Beach's longest-running gay club, Greater Miami & Miami Beach's gay nightlife is always a good time.

AZUCAR NIGHTCLUB — Not to be confused with the beloved Little Havana ice cream shop of the same name, Azucar Nightclub is a lively Latin LGBTQ+ club just off Coral Way. With a cabaret-style stage and a high-energy dance floor, it's a great place for late-night weekend parties with everything from drag races to cabaret shows, live DJs and bottle service. With recurring parties like Crazy Friday, Super Sabados and Domingo de Cabaret, there's always something wild and fun going down at Azucar.

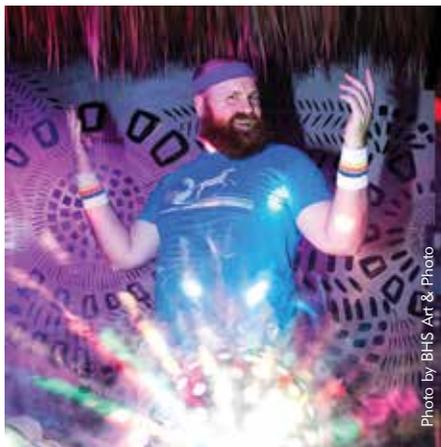
BAR GAYTHERING @ HOTEL GAYTHERING — Set inside Hôtel Gaythering on Lincoln Road in South Beach, which proudly calls itself the "gayest hotel in Miami Beach," Bar Gaythering is a cheeky, approachable lobby bar that plays host to a variety of theme nights and a daily happy hour from 5 to 7 p.m. The red and black décor lends the Gaythering a sexy vibe, and the mood can range from laidback to "anything goes" depending on the time of night. Monday means karaoke, and Wednesday is trivia night, both hosted by drag queen CC Glitzer. On Thursdays, come out for boozie bingo with drag queen Blaime Forret. Friday is everyone's favorite, the Bears & Hares party. The hotel is also home to a men's sauna if you fancy some steam before or after a trip to the bar.

CLUB BOI AT VILLA NIGHTCLUB — For a wild night out, look no further than Club Boi's Sexy Saturdays party at the Villa Nightclub in Allapattah. The dance club serves up urban and Caribbean vibes with flashing neon lights, bottle service and a high-energy dance floor. DJs Dias and Gavin spin crowd-pleasing mixes with everything from hip hop to R&B, reggae, soca and dancehall to keep the party grooving until late night.

DOUBLE STUBBLE AT GRAMPS — Head to Gramps in Wynwood on Thursday nights for the raucous Double Stubble party with resident DJs Hottpants and Mystic Bill, plus a rotating cast of drag queens, trans and non-binary performers. The sprawling indoor-outdoor bar with a pizza window is a local favorite, drawing a diverse crowd out for a good time. Drag queen Karla Croqueta often plays host in the evening, serving up a free-spirited and irreverent night out.

KILL YOUR IDOL — A beloved South Beach dive bar with a punk spirit, Kill Your Idol has been a mainstay on Española Way since 2012. This spot promises cheap drinks and live music with no cover and no reservations. Some Fridays are drag nights, but any night of the week at Kill Your Idol is solid. Check the events calendar before your visit for the lineup of live music, DJs and even burlesque performances.

PALACE — Palace is South Beach's iconic gay bar on Ocean Drive, famous for nightly drag shows and a weekend drag brunch where queens sashay down the sidewalk entertaining everyone in sight. From Fantasia Royale Gaga to Poison Ivy, Palace is home to some of Miami's top drag queen talent. With a massive outdoor patio and sidewalk seating, the indoor bar is often a high-energy, DJ-fueled scene. Open from 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. every day, the time is always right for a visit to Palace. And if you're looking for a day at the beach, right across the street from the bar is the 12th Street "gay beach" with a scene of its own.



LGBT VISITOR CENTER OF MIAMI BEACH

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LGBT
Visitor Center

NATHAN'S BAR — Situated in the heart of Washington Avenue's nightlife district, Nathan's Bar is one of South Beach's newest gay bars. With glittering disco balls overhead and glowing neon street art covering the walls, the bar and dance club has a playful spirit and welcoming tropical vibe. You'll also find framed photos of Madonna, Brady Bunch memorabilia and the Pink Panther as décor, serving up a healthy dose of nostalgia.

R HOUSE — Chef Rocco Carulli and his husband Owen Bale opened R House, a trendy Wynwood eatery and art gallery in a sprawling indoor/outdoor warehouse-style space, back in 2014. Their concept evolved through the years after partnering with drag queen Athena Dion and DJ Jody McDonald. Today, R House is a gay entertainment mecca with a lively weekend drag brunch. On Friday evenings, come out for the Yas Queen RuPaul's Drag Race viewing party followed by R House's own drag show starring Miami's fiercest queens. The Saturday Escandalo party is a drag show with a Latin twist featuring a live salsa band. With Chef Rocco's creative Latin cuisine and mixology program, a night out at R House is both sophisticated and high-spirited.

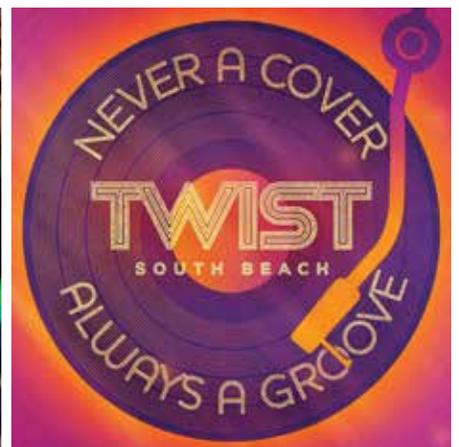
SCORE — What was once a gay nightclub mecca on South Beach's Washington Avenue has now become a roving party all across Greater Miami & Miami Beach. If you want to party with Score today, you'll have to check their events calendar to find out when and where they're popping up next. From a Gotham City-themed rave in Doral during Miami Music Week to a Pride Week party at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant near Miami International Airport, Score knows how to throw a wild party.

SKY BAR AT AXELBEACH MIAMI — Located inside a historic Art Deco building (that, fun fact, was home to Ace Ventura, Pet Detective in the iconic 90s movie), AxelBeach Miami is a South Beach hotel that caters specifically to gay travelers. Open Wednesday through Sunday, the al fresco Sky Bar is the perfect retreat. Try a pomegranate margarita



or watermelon sugar gin cocktail beneath the palm trees in the tropical courtyard with a decorative ice block floor. The stylish hotel is also home to a pool bar, restaurant and steam room, making it the perfect place for gay travelers to mix and mingle.

TWIST — Possibly Miami's most iconic gay bar, Twist has kept the party going in South Beach for almost 30 years. The two-level, multi-room nightclub with three dance floors is always an adventure. From late night DJ parties to go-go dancers, drag queens and a diverse crowd of both locals and visitors, a visit to Twist is a must for gay travelers in Miami. With the motto "never a cover, always a groove," this hotspot has a welcoming atmosphere. 🌺





...a natural, comfortable and inclusive environment for all our guests.



The Virginia Key Outdoor Center offers top quality rentals of kayaks, paddleboards, surf skis, and bicycles. At VKOC you can learn to paddle in a beautiful sheltered lagoon. One of the few places where flatwater is available year-round. With the ocean just a two-minute paddle away, visitors can kayak and paddle in the Atlantic, visit white sand beaches, or explore mangroves and observe avian and marine life.



LGBTQ+ Annual Events

For dates and information about all events in Greater Miami & Miami Beach, go to VisitMiamiLGBTQ.com

TransArt

Jan

Wigwood

Feb

Gay8 Festival

Feb

Winter Party Festival

Mar

Miami Beach Pride

Mar/Apr

Fling Women's Weekend

Apr

OUTshine Film Festival

Apr

Sizzle Miami

May

SweetHeat Miami

May

Out in the Tropics

Apr/May

Wynwood Pride

Jun

No Fear, We're Queer LGBTQ Comedy Festival

Jun

Celebrate Orgullo

Oct

Circuit Miami

Nov/Dec

Art Gaysel

Dec

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ONE DESTINATION, SO MANY FLAVORS

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WHAT'S ON?