





MAGIC CITY

*Miami's always been a party town. It still is—only now it's got thriving restaurant, art, and culture scenes to go with it.
Welcome to America's sexiest city.*

THE ULTIMATE PENTHOUSE

The Aston Martin Residences, rising from one of the last parcels of available land along Miami's waterfront, will be a 66-floor ultra-luxury skyscraper that will tower above its neighbors once completed. The building's design is borrowed partly from Aston Martin's own vehicles. Resident perks will include 24-hour valet service, an art gallery, a fitness center, movie theaters, and even an infinity pool, on the 55th floor.

Buyers of the property's pricier apartments will receive a special limited-edition Aston Martin "Miami Riverwalk" DB11. Only 47 units of the car will be produced, with customized interiors made from the finest materials. And the buyer of the \$50 million penthouse will be handed one of the most sought-after cars on the planet: a \$2.3 million Aston Martin Vulcan. *That's* what we call an amenity. —Keith Gordon



THE PARTY MOVES DOWNTOWN

Hot neighborhoods like Brickell in the core of Miami are pulling crowds from South Beach and beyond

Text by SHAYNE BENOWITZ

It's a Thursday night in Brickell. Diners at Komodo nibble on hamachi crudo as a wave of leggy young women parade through the dining room around them, filling up tables in a section inconspicuously presided over by a large security guard. David Grutman darts around the floor with the alertness of a regal hunting dog, nose in the air, iPhone in hand, anticipating the imminent arrival of the evening's VIP guests.

The managing partner of Miami Beach nightclubs LIV and Story, Grutman (see Q&A, page 50) opened Komodo in 2015 as his first foray into both the restaurant world and the rapidly developing Brickell financial district on Miami's mainland, located across Biscayne Bay from South Beach and adjacent to downtown, bordered by the Miami River. In recent years, Brickell has seen a boom in luxury condominiums, restaurants, and nightlife venues, making the area a desirable place to live and play, especially among Miami's young professionals.

Tonight at Komodo, Diddy is throwing a Welcome to Miami party for retired New York Yankees captain and new Miami Marlins co-owner Derek Jeter. In attendance are a cast of characters who regularly headline Grutman's establishments: DJ Khaled, Busta Rhymes, and French Montana. This is exactly what diners at Komodo are here for—a chance to rub elbows with the celebrities Grutman has famously befriended by throwing legendary parties in Miami for the past decade.

He initially saw potential in Brickell when he noticed guests were dining at popular restaurants like Zuma and Perricone's Marketplace & Cafe before going to the beach for his clubs. "I think they just want to go with the hot places, to tell you the truth," he says. "And for the first time ever, people see Miami has an urban area now and not just South Beach. It amazes me that people travel from all parts of Miami to go to Komodo, despite Brickell being known as more of a business and financial district. I never thought in a million years people would leave the beach and come over here."

On the way back to South Beach, there are more restaurants and bars in Brickell and downtown worth swinging by than ever before. A U.S. subsidiary of Hong Kong-based Swire Properties debuted the \$1.05 billion mixed-use development Brickell City Centre, a high-end, alfresco shopping center with multiple restaurants, office towers, and condominiums, in November 2016.

But Don't Rule Out South Beach Just Yet...

Sure, downtown and Brickell are heating up, but South Beach will always be hot. Visitors in the know will always want a room at **SLS South Beach** or **The Setai**, a steak at **Prime 112**, or a table at **LIV**. But South Beach is also evolving. New hotels, restaurants, and nightlife are moving inland and away from the busiest stretches of Ocean Drive to hot spots like Collins Avenue and the area surrounding Collins Park, where boutique hotels are being built or refurbished. **The Plymouth**, for example, brings an art deco redesign to its property, featuring an outpost of NYC's acclaimed **Blue Ribbon Sushi Bar & Grill** and its famous fried chicken.

Kimpton Angler's Hotel offers pampered seclusion steps from the beach, featuring suites, lofts, two-story villas, and three-story poolside bungalows. The hotel is expanding and plans to have a new 85-room tower, complete with a rooftop pool, finished in early 2018. **Washington Park Hotel**, meanwhile, is an art deco refuge and home to the second outpost of New York's **Employees Only**, a speakeasy hidden in the venue's historic coral house. —*KG*

"Coming from a European background, in which apartment living was the norm, led me to develop here," says Ugo Colombo, a Milan-born developer who was one of the first to build luxury condominiums in Brickell back in the 1990s. "I saw a void in Miami's condo market because buyers typically associated 'luxury' with larger-style homes. So I set out to develop 'mansions in the sky,' a.k.a. large, luxury condominiums with water views, over-the-top amenities, security." Colombo's latest project, Brickell Flatiron, is slated to debut in 2019. "I always believed that sooner or later that area would become very attractive. It needed a catalyst like Brickell City Centre to really give it a boost."

Across the Miami River, downtown Miami is a neighborhood of contrasts. Historic beaux arts architecture and cozy hipster haunts abut cavernous warehouses turned after-hours nightclubs. The intersection of N. Miami Ave. and NW 11th St. offers a concentrated snapshot of this juxtaposition, where **EnEVEN Miami**, the 24-hour nightclub-cabaret, quasi-gentlemen's-club hybrid, is kitty-corner to **Club Space**, the city's long-standing after-hours techno club, which has been known to stay open continually.

But between these two megaclubs, a trio of homey bars and restaurants offer a completely different kind of night out. **The Corner** is a softly lit bar with large picture windows and rough-hewn wood paneling serving some of the city's most expertly mixed classic cocktails to an eclectic local crowd. A few doors down, **Fooq's** is an intimate restaurant specializing in global fare with Persian and Italian influences, where a wall of ephemera features both a Native American dream catcher and a Grateful Dead acid bear.

While the area is still on the rise, downtown is ripe for further development, and many see it as Miami's next It neighborhood. "As more people move in, you'll see increased demand for restaurants and shopping at the ground level," Colombo says. The Brightline high-speed rail service and its MiamiCentral station will connect downtown Miami to Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach before the end of the year, and the forthcoming, nearly 30-acre, \$3 billion-plus **Miami Worldcenter** mixed-use development is slated for 2019, exponentially increasing the area's curb appeal.

As Grutman puts it, "There's a lot going on. Miami should be excited."

THE NIGHT KING

David Grutman might not party like he used to, but he still rules Miami's club scene

Text by KEITH GORDON

David Grutman is the reigning king of Miami nightlife. And in a city of glitz, glamour, and celebrity, heavy is the crown. Grutman, who worked his way from bartending in a mall to overseeing a nightlife empire, owes his success to his nonstop energy, enthusiasm, and determination. His flagship club, LIV at the Fontainebleau, is a model for the modern superclub. The 43-year-old Florida native, who is developing a flurry of new restaurants and lounges, and has a hotel deal in the works, took a few minutes from his busy schedule to speak with *Maxim* about his reign.

What gives you an edge in such a hypercompetitive industry?

I'm a really energetic person. I love what I'm doing. I don't really do stuff that I'm not passionate about or that I'm not that into, so I like to convey that to people. How I do that is through my energy. Listen, I have bad days like everybody else, but if I walk into an environment, I want to make sure that I'm setting that tone for everybody else around me because I think my energy and my feeling is contagious to the rest of the team.

What makes Miami unique as a party city?

Miami was one of those cities where in the '80s and '90s people kind of saw it as the wild, wild West. It actually gave people a really safe environment for them to let go of their inhibitions, which really helps. That's why these celebrities and big clients will come here with us, knowing that they're safe.

How do Miami parties differ from those in L.A. or NYC?

When people party in the city that they live in they're a lot more reserved than they are when they let loose in a vacation or jet-setting scenario. If you go out in NYC it's pretty fucking boring. People are really uptight and reserved because they don't know who from their company is there or what could happen. In Miami, there are no rules for that, so people let loose.

HOW TO PARTY ON A YACHT

There's nothing that says "Welcome to Miami" quite like cruising through the aquamarine waters of Biscayne Bay, popping bottles, and gazing at the glittering skyline aboard a sleek yacht. Whether it's a fast and stylish 40-foot red VanDutch open, or a luxurious, fully loaded 76-foot Sunseeker Manhattan with Jet Skis and multiple staterooms, there are plenty of charter options to choose from.

HOW TO CHARTER

The Advantaged Yacht Charters & Sales is a favorite among celebrities for its wide selection of megayachts and fully customizable packages. Their marquee vessel, the 122-foot Oceanfast *Never Say Never*, was featured in the SNL Digital



LIV is widely recognized as the crown jewel of Miami nightlife. What's the key to keeping guests surprised and entertained?

We really feel like when people come to Miami they look at LIV as that benchmark of what nightlife is supposed to be. The one thing we focus on is we don't just sit back and not do anything. We really try to give clubgoers a different experience every night they come.

How do you fight off competition from the constant stream of new clubs?

Once you get [to the top], everyone is gunning for us. Anytime a new club is opening, they always say, "We're going to be the next LIV." They always refer to us in everything they do. Which is fine; I think it's cute.

What is it like having to work within the context of a huge party? Is it hard to stay professional and on task in the middle of the revelry?

When you're trying to throw the party, it's like you don't want to really be part of that party. My care is about other people, so I'm just looking toward them. Listen, when I was younger I'm sure I would love to have shots with everybody and do everything with everybody. As you get older it's just about making sure that [the guests] are having the best time.

What are your best Miami nightlife recommendations?

The Design District is a new up-and-coming area. We actually have a really cool coffee shop there [OTL] and are opening a new restaurant [Swan] with a lounge above. So many cool stores, a lot of really cool designers, and stuff you can't get anywhere else.

You need to go to Little Havana. It's supercool to see the guys, the old-school Cubans, playing dominoes. There's a lot of great art there: Cuban art. And a place called Ball & Chain that makes great mojitos. Or the ice cream parlor Azucar: They have Coca-Cola ice cream. It's the best.

But definitely get on a boat while you're in Miami. You have to see Miami from that perspective.

Short "I'm on a Boat" and has been taken for a spin by Justin Bieber. On-demand yachting services, like YachtLife and Boatbound, provide a platform to search thousands of available charters, narrowed down based on your needs and budget.

WHERE TO GO

Explore Biscayne Bay, spy on Star Island mansions, get lost in Elliott Key's nature preserve, or party at the Haulover Sandbar. If you have more time, the Florida Keys and the Bahamas are easily accessible from Miami.

DOCK & DINE

Cruise along the Miami River between a

canyon of high-rises and arrive in style at downtown hot spots like Seaspace and Kiki on the River, which provide dockage and a festive, Champagne-soaked scene. Alternatively, the Standard, Miami Beach offers mellow, bohemian vibes, a swimming pool, a spa, and a restaurant with dockage (best for smaller boats), all floating on Belle Isle between South Beach and the mainland.

BY THE NUMBERS

Powerboats start from \$1,400. Small open yachts (under 50 feet) go for \$1,800 and up. Yachts (50 to 80 feet) start at \$2,200. Yachts larger than 80 feet are \$5,500 and up for a full day. —SB

JAY AJAYI'S MIAMI

The star running back on the best of South Beach and beyond

Text by KEITH GORDON

Just as *Maxim* went to print, Jay Ajayi was traded by the Miami Dolphins to the Philadelphia Eagles. But Ajayi spent the first years of his career with the Dolphins, and he still knows the best spots in the city. He finished last season a breakout NFL star, ranked fourth in the league in rushing with 1,272 yards. He's a workhorse back and three-down runner, as dangerous catching the ball out of the backfield as he is crashing between the tackles. Born in London and raised in Maryland and Texas, the former Boise State sensation is living his dream on and off the field, recently launching his own clothing line, YURP[^]. *Maxim* caught up with the 24-year-old for an insider's look at Miami and what keeps him busy when he's not steamrolling opposing defenses.

Favorite Miami neighborhood

Wynwood. I love the vibe and the creative environment. The area is inspiring and helps inspire my own fashion brand [YURP[^]].

Best spot for good eats

I love eating at STK [an upscale steakhouse and lounge] in South Beach.

Best place to grab a drink

I always like to vibe with good company and people-watch at low-key spots every now and then. Kiki on the River [Greek food] and Sugar [an Asian fusion restaurant and bar at EAST, Miami] are my favorites for that.

Miami's car culture

The car culture is huge in Miami. You always see the nicest cars when out in South Beach, to where it almost feels like a competition. I drive a Benz.

Miami's reputation as a party town

I definitely think the Miami [party] culture is exactly how it's portrayed, but I try not to get caught up in the nightlife too much. I will occasionally step out to LIV or Story.

The best off-field outdoor activities

Definitely having a fun boat day. Every now and then I enjoy going out on a Jet Ski.

Favorite aspect of Miami

I just love the style of life out here in Miami.



I'm still young, so I'm able to both enjoy my career and live in a place where people from all over the world come for vacation.

Home after football

I'm not sure yet. London, Texas, New York, Cali. But yeah, Miami is definitely in the mix.





OCEAN DRIVE

How to ride around Miami in style

To get past the VIP ropes in South Beach, you'll want to arrive in a hot ride. Consider a convertible Lamborghini or Rolls-Royce Phantom Drophead from MPH Club, a rental company whose roster includes supercars, private jets, and yachts. Car rentals start at \$395.

For a more adrenaline-fueled option, check out Miami Exotic Auto Racing, where drivers can test out the newest McLaren or Ferrari at Homestead-Miami Speedway. A few hundred dollars gets you behind the wheel, but consider the three-car package (\$799-\$899), which includes the finest Italian, British, and German automobiles. —KG



ESCAPE TO THE EVERGLADES

The best ways to explore the wetlands (and hunt predatory pythons)

Text by KEITH GORDON



South Florida is inhospitable to humans. In fact, few people lived there until a series of projects in the 19th and 20th centuries drained much of the area to allow for development. What remains of South Florida's natural wetland makes up Everglades National Park, a complex and diverse ecosystem that covers 1.5 million acres. A UNESCO World Heritage site and designated biosphere reserve responsible for a third of all Floridians' water supply, Everglades National Park is an ecological nirvana.

Just over an hour from Miami, the Everglades offer a range of activities for visitors. There are miles of hiking paths available, but many choose to explore the area on the water. **Everglades National Park Boat Tours** rents kayaks and canoes (\$45–\$55 per day for a kayak, \$38 per day for a three-person canoe), ideal for paddling through the mangrove trees. For a more thrilling outing, try an airboat; **Gator Park Airboat Tours** offers private boat rentals (starting at \$250 per hour). Remember, this isn't a zoo: The animals in the wetlands are wild, and that gator lying motionless beside the footpath likely isn't dead. Keep your distance if you don't want to become a cautionary tale.

FOREIGN INVADERS

The Everglades are under attack from invaders from abroad, upending the entire region's ecosystem. Burmese pythons—some were pets that were foolishly released, while others escaped from a facility during Hurricane Andrew—have taken over much of the Everglades. These snakes can grow to more than 20 feet, and have no natural predators in the area once they reach even moderate size. The result has been the decimation of the Everglades' mammal and bird populations as the python population grows unchecked. The State of Florida has instituted specific trapping and hunting programs to try and combat the problem. Visitors can sign up for a python hunt, but the animals are nearly impossible to track and capture, meaning this ecological wonderland faces a real threat—one with no solution in sight.

