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NINEBLUE.COM TRAVEL GUIDE

# MIAMI



BEST ATTRACTIONS

MONUMENTS & SITES

BEST FAMILY HOTELS

KID-FRIENDLY SITES

FUN IN MIAMI!

FREEBIES & CHEAPIES!

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# INTRODUCTION

Miami is known as “The Gateway to America” thanks to its impressive blend of a multitude of cultures. Cuban, Bahamian, African American, European and Central American influences are felt throughout the city in its places of art, commerce and culinary delights.

All of this diversity is set against a backdrop of scenic south Florida, an area so unique many say it is like a country of its own. In how many places in the world can you spend the morning strolling beaches populated by the most beautiful and glamorous people and the afternoon riding an airboat through alligator infested swamp-land?

Whatever you are looking for from a vacation, you will find it represented somewhere in Miami. South Beach is home to the trendiest clubs and restaurants, where you will see models and celebrities wandering about in the wild.

The beaches of the area have pristine white sand and the rolling waves of the Atlantic Ocean. Little Havana and Little Haiti are rich neighborhoods allowing you to become immersed in a culture’s daily life through interaction. Co-

conut Grove is filled with historic landmarks.

The Everglades has one of the most unique ecosystems in the entire world. History and nature are themes you will see repeated throughout the city and its surroundings. This is an area that is not only aware of its roots but celebrates them through historic restoration, upkeep and dedications. Sprawling mansion homes have become parks at which visitors can witness what it was like to be a settling member of this area.



## **Miami Trivia:**

Greater Miami is the only metropolitan area in the United States whose borders encompass two national parks. You can hike through pristine Everglades National Park or ride on glass-bottom boats across Biscayne National Park.

# GETTING AROUND

Due to the size of the city and how spread out it is, renting a car is a very practical enterprise when visiting Miami. Be cautious though - drivers in the city have been ranked as the rudest in the United States two years in a row by an auto club poll.

For that matter, the city is also ranked as one of the most dangerous cities in the nation for pedestrians. Whether you're in the car or on foot, it is wise to be cautious of what is occurring around you. Don't fret, though, the drivers aren't actively gunning for you. The fast pace and thick population of the city mostly cause it.

There are public transportation options in Miami. The Miami-Dade Transit authority operates the Metromover, the elevated rapid transit system known as the Metrorail, and the Metrobus (a good choice for those destinations not on the main lines). Check the websites for each of the transportation methods to determine which route (or routes) will be needed to get to your destinations.

There are four interstate highways that service the city: I-75, I-95, I-

195 and I-395. There are also several highways, including Route 1, Route 27, Route 41 and Route 441.

The city is so large that it is a good idea to make a map of your desired locations from your hotel on an online mapping program such as



Map Quest. Getting around Miami isn't as daunting as it may sound. Advance preparation will only make the process run more smoothly. If you are really without

a clue as to how you should get from point A to point B, ask the hotel staff and they will be glad to assist you.

Navigating the city is made easier if you have some conception of where the neighborhoods are and what they consist of.

The *Downtown* district is in the east central section of the city and consists of all of the Islands, the

# WHAT TO EXPECT

Culture, nature, and history are three words that sum up Miami. The city has become somewhat of a pop culture icon due to its glamour, diversity and interesting environmental features. Hit television shows like Miami Vice and CSI: Miami have used this city as a backdrop for these reasons. Few other locales can promise a transition from the white sand of South Beach to the murky waters of the Everglades.

If you want to spend your vacation in the great outdoors, Miami offers plenty of opportunities for this. Beach lovers can soak up the sun on the white sand of Crandon Park Beach or splash in the surf under the watchful eyes of the lifeguards.

Climb the over one hundred steps to the lighthouse at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park to get a bird's eye view of why it is rated one of the best ten beaches in the nation. Those who want some sophistication with their beach experience can head over to the glamorous South Beach.

Beaches aren't the only way you can experience the (usually) great weather in Miami. Historic sites abound in the city and are usually set on luscious properties of land that can be a welcome refreshment from the blaring sun. The Coral

Gables Merrick House stands as a museum honoring the founding family of the area. The Deering Estate is a four hundred and fifty acre estate that belonged to Charles Deering, son of the founder of the International Harvester Machines of Chicago. Visit the eighty two thousand gallon Venetian Pool to see a wonder carved from a coral rock quarry.



## **Miami Trivia:**

Miami-Dade County has a workforce of more than one million multi-lingual, multi-skilled men and women

Miami has more than 100 financial institutions

Miami has the largest number of custom brokers and freight forwarders in US

100 foreign consular offices and foreign trade offices

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# **ANNUAL EVENTS**

## **January**

Orange Bowl Classic  
The World Orchid Conference  
Miami Art Deco Weekend  
Indian Arts Festival  
Taste of the Grove  
Beaux Arts Festival of the Arts

## **February**

Coconut Grove Arts Festival  
International Map Fair  
Miami International Boat Show and Sailboat Show  
Miami International Film Festival  
Home Design and Remodeling Show

## **March**

Calle Ocho Carnaval  
Miami Winter Music Conference  
Miami Grand Prix  
Dade County Youth Fair and Exposition

## **March – April**

The Great Metrozoo Egg Safari  
Feast With The Beasts  
Miami-Dade County Fair and Exhibition

## **April**

Great Sunrise Balloon Race  
South Beach Film Festival

## **May**

Miami Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival  
Arabian Nights Festival  
Coconut Grove Bed Race  
Miami International Home & Garden Show

## **June**

Miami/Bahamas Goombay Festival  
South Florida Boat Show

## **July**

America's Birthday Bash  
4th of July Extravaganza  
Fourth of July Celebration  
Colombian Independence Day Festival  
International Mango Festival  
Everglades Music and Crafts Festival

## **August**

Annual Miami Reggae Festival  
Miami/Bahamas Goombay Festival

## **September**

Festival Miami  
Florida Marine Aquarium Show

## **October**

Discovery of America Day  
Hispanic Heritage Festival  
West Indian American Day  
Carnival Extravaganza  
Coral Gables Oktoberfest  
International Women's Show  
Metroboo

## **November**

Ramble-A Garden Festival  
South Florida Auto Show  
South Miami Art Festival  
Jiffy Lube Miami  
Miami Bookfair International  
November Home Show  
Harvest Festival  
Puerto Rican Festival  
Miami Lakes Country Holiday and Crafts Show

## **December**

World's Largest Indoor Flea Market  
King Mango Strut  
The Nutcracker  
Junior Orange Bowl  
Orange Bowl Parade  
Big Orange New Year's Eve Celebration  
Bayfront Park's New Year

# FAMILY ATTRACTIONS

The Miami **Art Deco District** has the world's largest collection of Streamline Modern Art Deco architecture. The buildings were revolutionary when they were constructed in the early 1900's and they have influenced other buildings all over the world. Examples of the era include, the Sherbrooke Hotel and the Miami Beach Post Office.

Several tours explore the Art Deco District including the "Underworld Tour" that will take you to former hot-spots of illegal activity like Al Capone's office! The Art Deco District is a fun, interesting place that begs to be explored. Be sure to visit the next time you're in the Miami Area.

**Location:** Atlantic Ocean on the east, Alton Road on the west, 6th St. to the south, and Dade Blvd (along the Collins Canal) to the north.

Once a haven for bohemian artists and radicals, **Coconut Grove**, a "village with a rhythm all its own"

still maintains a zany, energetic charm. Ten minutes south of downtown Miami, The Grove is defined by palm tree lined roads and plentiful shops and restaurants.

The waterfront parks are the perfect spot for observing wildlife (especially manatees) and water sports that take place in Biscayne Bay. Historic sites include Miami City Hall, housed in a former Pan American airplane hangar, and the 110-year old The Barnacle, former home of pioneer Commodore Ralph Monroe.

Visit the Viscaya Museum and Gardens for a 70-room estate surrounded by ten acres of gardens and fountains. The Miami Museum of Science and Space Transit Planetarium feature interactive exhibits on subjects ranging from dinosaurs to baseball.

**Location:** Coconut Grove District

## **Miami Trivia:**

The word "Miami" comes from the Tequesta word "Mayaimi", which has been translated as "sweet water".



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