



# Art and SOUL

*Miami's art scene is far from traditional, spilling out of galleries and museums, onto its heady streets and into its soulful hospitality establishments, from luxury South Beach hotels to the walls of its homegrown dining destinations*

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previous page, **DAMIEN HIRST**. *Gone But Not Forgotten*. 2014.  
Located at Faena Hotel  
facing page, **ALEXI TORRES**. *As Man Thinketh*. 2022. Oil on Canvas.  
84x96cm. On-show at The Sagamore Hotel South Beach.

Miami could easily be mistaken for a movie set. There's Miami Beach, home to retro-cool Art Deco villas and powdery palm-strewn sands. There's the old-world energy of Little Havana and the twisting futuristic towers of Brickell. In this adults' playground, a heartfelt and pulsating hospitality scene bubbles away, shaped by the city's spot as a leading tourist destination and culinary trailblazer. Artsy hideouts line Ocean Drive, showy world-famous hotel groups have set up shop in Brickell high-rises and South Beach brings the heat with its historic Southern buildings and international dining scene.

In this tourism-driven town, hotels are so much more than places to bed down, but lifestyle hubs, members' clubs, dining destinations and icons of the skyline. In a city where art is part and parcel of everyday life – fostered through the city's famed Art Basel Miami Beach – they also double as showcases themselves, immersing guests in Miami's thriving art scene away from the traditional gallery setting with high-level exhibitions and homegrown talent shows. This love and commitment to the arts are not just found in the city's boutique offering, but in global chains too, as mega brands embrace the city's artistic, offering up spaces for artist incubation programmes and artist-in-residence exhibitions.

For many of Miami's slickest hotels, it's become second nature to be a part-hotel, part-art gallery, offering a complete visual experience from lobby exhibitions and

in-room sculptures to dedicated creative spaces in the hotel itself. On South Beach, Faena is renowned for its high-level art installations and murals and its Faena Art Center Project Room, a shell for touring exhibitions and a clever extension of the Faena art programme. Nearby, The Sagamore's love for the visual arts has inspired its nickname "The Art Hotel", while The Betsy Hotel runs artist-in-residence programmes, a hotel whose galleries and exhibitions garner as much attention as those in traditional museum spaces.

This level of immersion and commitment also thrives in Miami's drinking and dining scene: a sizzling mix of Cuban, Caribbean and Southern influences with splashes of international flair. Miami's hunger goes far deeper than the cuisines it's known for, and restaurants across the city are now feeding an appetite for creativity. Such is so, that a handful of the city's most iconic dining establishments offer a menu of both culinary and visual arts. A laid-back Italian displays the work of British photographer Miles Aldridge, while newcomer Sexy Fish serves a \$20 million menu of Damien Hirst and Frank Gehry sea-life sculptures – a feast for foodies and acolytes alike.

Such a fluid and pioneering approach to the arts is typical of Miami, a city known for its hedonistic, creative and go-getting approach to living and playing. Miami is a city where the art is palpable: not trapped in the confines of often sterile museums, but dances on the breeze and into everything that lives there. ■

