

# LIVING THE RIGHT LIFE

Richard David Story



## It was a perfect night

—a touch of the tropics in the air, the sky lit with thousands of “great big diamonds,” as F. Scott Fitzgerald described the stars.

And here on the terrace at 1000 Venetian Way at the perfectly set table sat 20 of the most interesting people from old, new and future Miami. In their chic aerie overlooking PortMiami, Adam Koffler and his wife, Lisa Heiden, had gathered their own constellation of stars, ranging from the Argentinian developer Alan Faena, who is building the most ambitious project on Miami Beach in years, and photographer Iran

Issa-Khan to Chanel executive Barbara Cirkva, who works in Manhattan and weekends in Miami, and Princess Firyal of Jordan, who says she couldn’t imagine living anywhere else. The purpose? To show and tell me and the editors of DEPARTURES why Miami is where “it” is happening—the cool, restless vibrations of change, challenge and, yes, chic. It was the sort of gathering that one might find in New York, Paris, London, but...Miami?

“You can travel all over the world but you will never find a better quality of life than here. You wake up every morning

A present-day postcard from the past: Collins Avenue, 2014. Miami Beach is transforming itself, but its Art Deco golden years are everywhere.

MANUEL MAZZANTI

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with the sun shining, blue skies and beaches and you think you are on holiday,” says Heiden, who was born on Miami Beach, worked in Manhattan and London as an executive at ABC and headed “back home” in 2006. “Miami is one of the most exciting cities in the world right now. Here, you can create the life, the work, the profession you want while enjoying it all.”

Last October, *DEPARTURES* devoted a special issue to Africa; this year it's *MIAMI: AMERICA'S CITY OF THE FUTURE*. A place too often dismissed or completely misunderstood, Miami's moment is now. That said, when the *DEPARTURES* editorial team first started working on the issue back in January, we were often asked, “Are you sure there is enough *there* to fill an entire issue of the magazine?” Back then, I confidently answered, “Yes!” Though, to be honest, I was not sure of exactly what and how much we would find. Some eight months later, I would say, “Yes, and then some!”

To be sure, this is a different sort of issue, one that is not just filled with those insider addresses and access to private worlds so quintessentially *DEPARTURES*, but instead offers a broader and more all-encompassing look at the city, providing the context and history behind its current incarnation.

So why now? Among other things, real estate is booming and top-tier architects are redesigning the skyline in ways that are not only site-specific but unimagi-

nable anyplace else; because Miami Beach, that iconic stretch of Deco and sand, is exploding and expanding beyond the too-young and the too-tanned of South Beach; and because the diversity of the city has helped transform it from a typically American one into a subtropical global brand. And finally, short of the Caribbean or more far-flung destinations, Miami is a quick-fix, one-stop paradise come the chillier days of winter elsewhere.

“Even when he is flying commercial, not in his private jet, my neighbor's rooftop pool is hours away from Paris and Caracas—and Montreal and New York,” writes Miami chronicler T.D. Allman.

In the last decade the city has established itself as one of the most sophisticated and international of American cities. From Art Basel to

the New World Symphony to the Miami Heat, Miami's now a cultural player, with all the big money and big names that go along with that. Not that *everything* is coming up sunshine and orange groves. The Everglades, that great national park, is more endangered than ever, and as our panel on the rising tide makes clear, climatic changes and global warming have not ignored this city.

“Whether we like it or not, whether we admit it or not, Miami, for both good and ill, still points the way to America's future,” writes Allman in his introduction. Big, bold and thriving, Miami is an American city that deserves our attention. Right now. ♦

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Let's say you  
have 24 hours  
in Miami.  
Here's what  
**LISA HEIDEN**  
would suggest.

Lunch in Miami Beach at the Soho House, then head over to Miami to see The Pérez Art Museum Miami and CIFO Art Space, the Wynwood Walls, shop the Design District and check out Ironside in Little River—it's a conclave of artist and design workshops, with notable addresses like Sam Robin and Deborah Wechsleman. Hands down, Miami has some of the best midcentury and vintage shopping in the States. For vintage clothing and accessories, the only address you need to know is the legendary Cmadeleine for a treasure trove of goods through the ages. It's a favorite of designers and stylists worldwide and is packed during Art Basel. For midcentury furnishings, the best dealers are all on Biscayne Boulevard at Antiques Plaza, or on 125th Street...or take a side trip up to Palm Beach and go to West Dixie Highway. Not to be missed are:



CARLOS CASTELLAR  
Arts and Antiques,  
8650 Biscayne Blvd.; 305-761-9682

MICHELLE CONTESSA  
8650 Biscayne Blvd.; 305-761-5343

GUSTAVO OLIVERI ANTIQUES  
750 NE 125th St.; 305-891-7575

VERMILLION 20TH-CENTURY FURNISHINGS  
765 NE 125th St.; 305-893-7800