

# POSH ACQUALINA HAS PERKS FOR CANADIANS



**ROCHELLE LASH**  
*Checking In*

Homesick in Miami Beach?  
How about the loonie at par and NHL games streamed on your in-room TV? Or a comfort breakfast with a Tim Horton's double-double and Canadian maple syrup?  
The opulent Acqualina Resort & Spa on the Beach is reaching out with Canadian flavour and a dollar-at-par deal that is hard to beat for snowbirds who love la dolce vita.  
Acqualina, oceanfront in Sunny Isles Beach, has a rare pedigree. The hotel and its ESPA both are rated five-star by the Forbes Travel Guide, an unerring index to the finest in hospitality. A 98-room hotel of classic luxury flanked by two exclusive towers of 188 condos, it is the ritziest resort north of Bal Harbour and south of Palm Beach.  
Prices are high, even with the loonie-at-par deal, but Acqualina's suites are splendidly swish, and all recently renovated. And the hotel is generous, not charging that pesky resort fee so common in Florida, and offering its guests complementary Wi-Fi, plus access to its exceptional spa facilities and the outstanding AcquaMarine program for youngsters.  
Bedecked with Italianate fountains and Mediterranean-inspired architecture, Acqualina has a sophisticated euro ambience, lavish interiors and top-drawer everything, all to cosset the beau monde and their youngsters.  
Car jockeys ferry Bentleys and Maseratis in a busy circular driveway on Collins Ave. Pool attendants glide by with treats of iced tropical fruit. Concierges procure treasures such as tickets to Art Basel Miami Beach, Dec. 3-6, and also orchestrate creative marriage proposals — complete with diamond rings and Champagne. With only five palatial rooms per floor, the hotel is designed for extravagance, comfort and the ultimate in privacy.  
The guest suites — from spacious junior suites to three-bedroom apartments — are luxuriously furnished in soothing neutrals with flashes of silver,



The luxurious suites at Acqualina Resort & Spa on the Beach in Sunny Isles, Fla., were renovated recently. The resort is offering Canadian snowbirds a dollar-at-par deal. *PHOTOS: ACQUALINA RESORT & SPA*



Acqualina Resort & Spa on the Beach in Sunny Isles, Fla., has four swimming pools and an exceptional spa.

gold and bronze, ebony lacquered furniture and rich satins, silks and chenille.  
This is five-star stuff, so the plasma TVs are large-screen, and the cream marble bathrooms have double vanities, glass showers and ESPA toiletries, and most have whirlpool tubs.

and white, that it's the envy of beachcombers strolling up and down the pristine sand of Sunny Isles Beach.  
The resort also has a swimming pool for every possibility — one for children, one for adults, one for such activities as aquafitness, plus a tranquil lounging pool at the spa.  
The Acqualina Spa, by the international brand ESPA, is one of the resort's pieces de résistance. What I find particularly appealing is that all guests can use the spa pool, steam room, cedar sauna, special-experience showers, the whirlpool with a waterfall and the relaxation room, bathed in coloured lights.  
Signature services include the Florida-inspired orange blossom exfoliation and massage, and the anti-aging facial with LED light therapy and a collagen mask.  
Another outstanding resort highlight is AcquaMarine, a super-cool (and free) program that keeps kids entertained and learning. It's based on marine lore, covering the mysteries of sharks, sea waves, ocean rescues, as well as use of a children's centre with movies, crafts and video games, plus outdoor soccer and basketball.

**IF YOU GO**  
Sunny Isles Beach is 20 kilometres south of Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and 30 kilometres north of Miami International Airport. Acqualina Resort & Spa on the Beach: 877-312-9742, 305-918-8000, [acqualinaresort.com](http://acqualinaresort.com); 17875 Collins Ave.; Sunny Isles Beach/Miami Beach, Florida. Price: 98 junior suites and suites with kitchens from \$400 U.S.; Canadian at par on certain rooms until Dec. 18; no resort fee; rates include access to spa facilities (not treatments), pools, AcquaMarine children's program and kids' centre, Wi-Fi, pools, beach setups, fitness centre, Cadillac Escalade shuttle for eight km; shoeshine. If you are paying in U.S. dollars, the fourth night is free and includes a \$40 spa credit. Extra: personal butler, babysitting, valet parking, pets (\$100 per visit). Packages available with spa, honeymoon perks, Art Basel Miami Beach (Dec. 3-6) and cruise connections. Sunny Isles Beach Visitor Center: 305-792-1952, [sunnyislesbeachmiami.com](http://sunnyislesbeachmiami.com) or [sibfl.net](http://sibfl.net); Greater Miami: 800-933-8448, [miamiandbeaches.com](http://miamiandbeaches.com).

AcquaMarine is a half-day or full-day adventure for children five to 12, all supervised, and parents are free to relax at the pool, beach or spa.

**FOOD AND DRINK**  
This swish hotel has lots of food options, from simple to gourmet, and all quite sociable.  
Il Mulino, the darling of Zagat New York, has a branch at Acqualina that serves lunch, Sunday brunch with live jazz and classic Italian dinners of wild mushroom risotto, chicken marsala and veal scaloppini, followed by creamy tiramisu and panna cotta.  
AQ by Acqualina, a contemporary bistro, has a creative cocktail bar, an excellent sushi bar staffed by master chefs, plus dishes such as grilled octopus, Wagyu burgers, lobster tagliatelli, pan-seared salmon, flatiron steak and chicken-basil meatballs. Adjacent to AQ, the Piazzetta Marketplace is an intimate Italian café for cappuccino, gelato and sweets.  
Costa Grill, at the beach, serves up fish tacos, shrimp cocktails, Cobb or lobster salads, ceviche and sandwiches.  
Add a pitcher of chilled white sangria, and you're in Acqualina's Mediterranean beat.

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