

HOTEL INTEL

FOUR SEASONS IS THE SURFSIDE STAR OF MIAMI BEACH



ROCHELLE LASH

The new Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club is the consummate purveyor of haute hospitality in the tony enclave of Surfside on the Atlantic shore of Miami Beach.

This unique Four Seasons consists of three luminous glass towers housing a luxurious 77-room hotel where Michelin stars are part of the culinary legacy, as well as 119 posh residences. How posh? The largest suite is a two-storey penthouse with its own pool, which rents for about US\$30,000 per night.

In an architectural coup de grace, the Four Seasons is built atop what was once the swanky private Surf Club, a historic gathering place with gorgeous bones and a legendary past. Glitterati of the mid 20th century such as Liz Taylor, Frank Sinatra and Ernest Hemingway anointed decadent parties, black-tie boxing matches, poolside fashion shows and circuses with acrobats swinging from chandeliers. Cut to today.

With much of the old-world glamour and exquisite mahogany and marble decor intact, the Surf Club has been transformed into the Four Seasons' grand lobby and restaurants, blending Miami's sexy jazz age with sleek modern chic.

Top-tier: Privileged guests at Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club enjoy the finest hospitality that money can buy: three swimming pools and bounteous gardens with lounge chairs; the Kids-for-All-Seasons club; exclusive resort boutiques; and superb spa life.

The guest room decor, by Parisian interior designer Joseph Dirand, is quintessentially Four Seasons. It's fresh, understated and restful, a harmonious composition of cream, sand, alabaster and the purest of whites. The large windows and glass balconies yield jaw-dropping views of

the Atlantic Ocean.

The hotel also is reviving mid-century "cabana culture." You can rent a deluxe pool cabana for the day, and pair it with a spa treatment and lunch. It's an amazingly indulgent mini-getaway and also a prized gift.

Impeccable facilities and accommodations, solicitous service and glorious gastronomy are de rigueur at this level of establishment. Your visit is personalized with comforts like customized massages, individual e-tablets for concierge requests and even a choice of mattress pads (from firm to plush), plus tech conveniences like touch-controlled drapes and lighting.

But those features are details, albeit divine details. To me, it's the sheer finesse and polish of Four Seasons at The Surf Club that create a superlative experience.

Dining: The cuisine at Four Seasons is among the most exciting along the Florida Gold Coast, from brunch to beach, and more. The Surf Club Restaurant is a tour de force by Thomas Keller, whose New York restaurant Per Se has three Michelin stars and who has been called the best chef in the U.S. by Time magazine.

Delicacies here include beef Wellington, lobster thermidor, crab cakes, eggs with caviar, marrow bones, avocado Louis (crab), plus steaks, chops, fish and Keller-worthy comfort classics like roast chicken and lasagna with braised beef and mushrooms. The Surf Club's bar also has a sizzling cocktail scene, before and after dinner.

The hotel's main restaurant, Le Sirenuse Miami, is a Mediterranean-themed branch of the Michelin-starred mother ship in Italy. Chef Antonio Mermolia prepares fare so authentic that some ingredients, such as buffalo mozzarella and pistachios for the gelato, are imported from Italy. Highlights include caprese salads, smoked scampi, eggplant Parmesan, risotto and veal piccata, as well as more international Chilean sea bass and Wagyu beef. Dining options abound. Mare,



Le Sirenuse Miami is one of the dining choices Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club in Miami Beach. PHOTOS: FOUR SEASONS HOTELS & RESORTS



The shimmering new Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club in Surfside is built around a glamorous 1930s private club.

the hotel's popular terrace bistro, is great for al fresco lunches, brunches and dinners of seafood crudo, roasted octopus, shrimp, truffle pizza or Tuscan white bean salads. Winston's on The Beach (named for Churchill, a Surf Club habitué) dishes up fish

tacos, cilantro falafel or steak and kale salads. Le Sirenuse Champagne Bar creates natural fruit-infused cocktails and also has Florida's largest selection of sparkling wine, from Prosecco to the finest French Champagnes. Rochelle@Rochellelash.com

IF YOU GO

Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club: 305-381-3333, 800-819-5053, fourseasons.com/surfside; 9011 Collins Ave., Miami Beach/Surfside, Florida.

Prices fluctuate: Rooms approximately US\$600-\$1,900, May-Oct. (suites cost more). From Nov.-April, rooms approximately US\$800-\$2,500. Holidays can be higher.

Resort fee is \$35 per room. Included are: courtesy car, two swimming pools, beach club, spa facilities (sauna, hammam), serenity lawns, newspapers, e-tablet, twice daily housekeeping, Bluetooth, shoeshine, bicycles, Wi-Fi, PlayStation. Children's menu available. At certain times, suites include resort credits of US\$300-\$500 per visit. Guests using Preferred Partners such as American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts or Virtuoso have benefits.

Dining: Le Sirenuse Miami and Mare, 786-482-2280, sirenusemiami.com; breakfast, lunch, cocktails, dinner nightly. The Surf Club Restaurant, 305-768-9440, surfclub-restaurant.com; cocktails, dinner nightly, brunch on Sat.-Sun.

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