

Sleek Beachwalk adds sizzle to Hallandale



ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

It's practical and pretty, and it's a good value.

Beachwalk Resort, a striking new 33-storey hotel-condo complex in Hallandale, Fla., has a commanding location on the Intracoastal Waterway, one block from its spectacular beach club on the Atlantic Ocean.

With sleek architecture and minimalist interiors, Beachwalk is a cool sanctuary from the heat and sun of South Florida. The look is by Pininfarina, an elite Italian design house that has created high style for Maserati and Ferrari.

Beachwalk's lobby is ultra-contemporary, with white linen sofas, mirrored coffee tables and colour pops of vivid lacquered ocean blue that reminded me of a flashy retro sports car.

The developer is the Related Group, whose CEO is George Perez, a prominent entrepreneur and art philanthropist, and the large-scale modern art in the lobby, including a Jim Dine woodcut, is from his personal collection.

Hallandale and neighbouring Hollywood, the southernmost communities of Greater Fort Lauderdale, are magnets for international vacationers, but also are wildly popular with Quebecers.

Beachwalk is a member of the Chambre de Commerce Québec-Floride, which recently sent an e-blast to 3,000 members offering discounts of up to 20 per cent on its suites.

IN RESIDENCE: Beachwalk is ideal as a home-away-from-home for snowbirds who want to stay a while. It has hotel rooms with two queen beds, which can connect with suites to make one-, two- and three-bedroom residential-style units.

They all have glass-fronted balconies and floor-to-ceiling windows and the suites have full stainless-steel kitchens, walk-in closets, TVs in both the bedrooms and living rooms and washer-dryers. Children can sleep on the suites' extra-wide living room couches that can be made up as beds, though they're not pullout sofa beds.

The rooms all have the same soothing décor in whites and pale



Suites at Beachwalk Resort in Hallandale, Fla., have wraparound balconies with dramatic views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway. **PHOTOS: BEACHWALK RESORT**

neutrals, with blond wood furniture and nubby sand-coloured carpets. The differences are the views: the Intracoastal, the city or the Atlantic — one block away, across Collins Ave.

THE MEAL PLAN: Overlooking the pool, Beachwalk Bistro & Market, a bright modern café, is a single stop for food and drinks, morning to night.

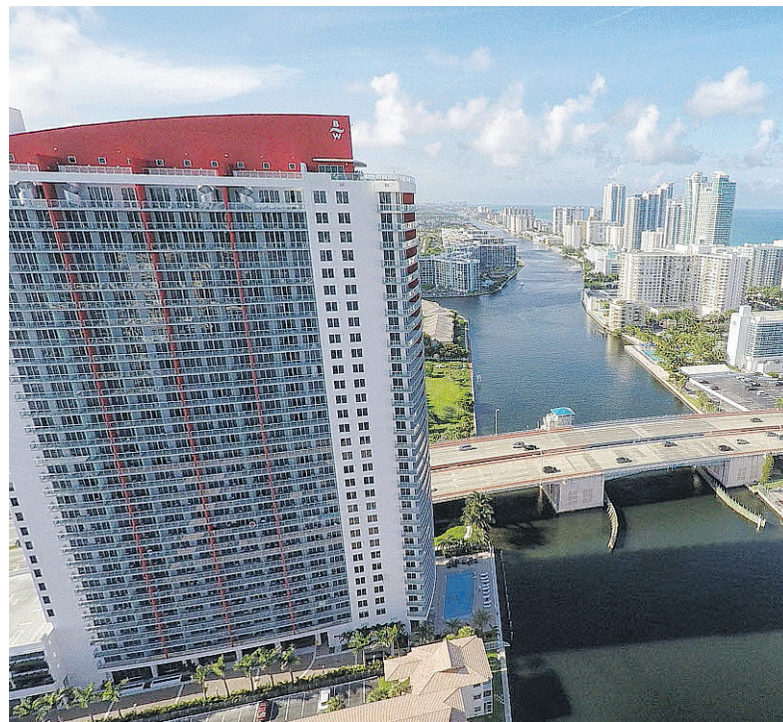
Breakfast features berry yogurt parfaits, huevos rancheros or eggs Benedict. For lunch, there are burgers, fish tacos, paninis and potato boats topped with cheese, bacon and pineapple salsa. There also is a pool menu. At Happy Hour, drinks and apps are half-price and the TVs are tuned to sports. If you prefer to stay in, the Market is a tiny takeout corner stocked with snacks and basics like milk, beer and wine.

For dinner, there are mains of beef, pork, chicken, fish and pasta, plus dishes with heat such as mahi mahi topped with a tangy arugula salsa verde, or green chili seafood enchiladas, Cajun shrimp with chorizo and chili-ginger wings.

Desserts are classic: Key lime pie, chocolate mousse cake, berry tarts and apple pie à la mode.

Like Beachwalk, the Bistro is practical and pretty. But there is more dazzle on the menu, one block away.

The also-new Hyde Beach Kitchen + Cocktails (HBK+C) is



The sleek, ultracontemporary 33-storey Beachwalk is a new stop on the Water Taxi, a sightseeing boat that travels to Fort Lauderdale attractions.

a beach club with sun chairs and umbrellas plus a three-storey lifestyle centre with upscale dining and drinking. Beachwalk guests can hop an electric buggy or walk over.

HBK+C developed its hip brand with locations in South Beach, Las Vegas and on Sunset Strip in Los Angeles, and as of summer 2015, has brought a dash of trendy chic to the condo-heavy world of Hallandale.

There is always something shaking, including football nights and mojito Mondays. Social Hour on Mondays through Thursdays, from 6 to 8 p.m., features \$1 oysters, \$5 rosé or bubbly and \$7 cocktails.

HBK+C offers beach service, glamorous lunches on the palm-shaded terrace and a sizable dinner menu with apps and small plates such as oxtail ragout, lobster pasta, burrata cheese, pizza

IF YOU GO

Hallandale Beach Blvd. is 16 kilometres south of Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and 37 km north of Miami International Airport. **Beachwalk Resort:** 844-594-7246, 954-266-0147, beachwalkresortfl.com; 2602 E. Hallandale Beach Blvd., Hallandale Beach, Fla. Beachwalk is managed by Gemstone Hotels & Resorts, which also manages The Essex near Burlington, Vt., and Topnotch Resort in Stowe (gemstoneresorts.com).

Price: Hotel rooms start at \$179 U.S. for two people; one-bedroom suites from \$239 U.S. for up to four people; two- and three-bedroom suites start at \$289 U.S. Resort fee of \$22.20 U.S. per night covers Wi-Fi, swimming pool, beach club/set-ups, electric cart to the beach, local calls, 24-hour fitness centre and shuttle to malls. CAA members get 10-per-cent discount.

Beachwalk Bistro & Market: breakfast, lunch, dinner, room service, pool service, happy hour, 5 to 7 p.m.

Hyde Beach Kitchen + Cocktails: 954-699-0901, 111 South Surf Road; Beach Bar, breakfast and lunch outdoors, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; restaurant on second floor, dinner and bar from 6 p.m.

Visit Florida: 888-735-2872, visitflorida.com. Greater Fort Lauderdale: 800-22-SUN-NY/800-227-8669; sunny.org; Hollywood, visithollywoodfl.org

and seafood, including soft-shell crab, scallops, crab cakes and octopus. For mains, chefs cook up chicken, tuna, steak and short ribs.

WHAT TO DO: As of this month, Beachwalk is a new stop on the Water Taxi, a sightseeing boat that travels to Las Olas Blvd., and other attractions in Fort Lauderdale.

Beachwalk runs a free shuttle to nearby entertainment hubs that have shopping, dining and nightclubs — Aventura Mall, which has upscale shops such as Nordstrom and a Ferrari store; the Hollywood Beach Boardwalk, a funky four-kilometre oceanfront promenade with street entertainers and ice-cream parlours; and The Village at Gulfstream Park, for shopping, Wine Down Wednesdays, Music in the Park on Saturdays and kids' fun all the time.

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