

UPGRADED SOLÉ MIAMI OOZES WITH FAMILY APPEAL

Adventures, events, attractions await at Sunny Isles Beach



ROCHELLE LASH
Hotel Intel

Solé Miami is the ideal hospitality ambassador of Sunny Isles Beach, a gorgeous Atlantic Ocean playground on a barrier island between Fort Lauderdale and South Beach.

It is a distinctive curved tower with contemporary design and all the Florida trimmings: glass-fronted balconies for sea views, a beach club, a poolside cocktail bar, and bistro cuisine at BALEENkitchen.

A Noble House hotel, Solé Miami is easygoing and stylish, with grassroots appeal and upscale hospitality. I met guests from Brazil, Russia, Europe and Australia, and they were all particularly keen on the hotel's family features and neighbourhood extras, like the kids' playground across the street. Visitors are also drawn by Sunny Isles attractions like the historic Newport fishing pier, awesome condo architecture and water adventures, from deep-sea fishing to kitesurfing.

The hotel has been totally refurbished, including the lobby, pool, deck and all 249 rooms and suites, many of which have panoramic ocean views.

The news: "Solé Miami is sporting a fresh, upbeat new look for 2020," said Bill Foster, regional director of marketing at Noble House. "It's more modern, both inside and outside."

"And our food and beverage program is transformed. We have interesting, accessible menus with the finest ingredients."

The rooms and condo-style suites — all redone with a simple, functional look — have full kitchens, living rooms, sofa beds and sometimes two TVs.

The renovations include flooring, furniture, lighting, beds and artwork, as well as refreshed bathrooms. The coastal decor mixes pristine white walls with aquamarine trim and sand-hued carpets, so it's cheerful and sea-inspired.

I recognized the Noble House



Many of Solé Miami's 249 rooms and suites have panoramic ocean views. PHOTOS: SOLÉ MIAMI



The new BALEENkitchen includes a lounge, bistro and terrasse.

hotel brand's beautiful bed sheets and deluxe toiletries infused with mango and coconut.

Food and drink: The new BALEENkitchen has satisfying, tantalizing menus and three inviting locations: the engaging bistro, with its new decor in linen and velvet, in blues and beiges; the

comfortable lounge, which has a daily happy hour; and the breezy terrasse, especially pretty with the glow of sunset on the waves.

BALEENkitchen cooks up light bites like Caribbean conch chowder, tuna tacos, Parmesan truffle fries or lobster sliders; and casual suppers of linguine

and short rib in Bolognese sauce, or herb-roasted chicken. Or you can go all out with delicacies like oysters, Key West shrimp, filet of beef, mahi-mahi or seafood cioppino.

Noble House's corporate chef, Adam Votaw, brings worldly experience from upscale resorts in Boca Raton and Vail, but uses his mother's recipe for BALEENkitchen's superb key lime pie. Now that's family appeal.

The neighbourhood: Sunny Isles Beach, a four-kilometre barrier island along the Atlantic Ocean coast in Miami-Dade County, is hopping with events.

It's known for its glamorous hotels, family condos and beautiful beaches, but it also fosters community spirit and an active lifestyle. Ranked the No. 1 U.S. destination by TripAdvisor's TravelCast, Sunny Isles Beach operates a free shuttle bus that runs locally and also links to neighbouring Aventura, Hallandale Beach and North Miami Beach.

IF YOU GO

Sunny Isles Beach is 22 kilometres south of Fort Lauderdale — Hollywood International Airport and 40 kilometres north of Miami International. Solé Miami and BALEENkitchen: 17315 Collins Ave., Sunny Isles Beach; 844-223-5493, 786-923-9300; solemiami.com.

Price: Rooms start at US\$169; one-bedroom suites start at \$203; two-bedroom suites start at \$337. Resort fee, \$30, includes pool, beach setups, in-room coffee, steam/sauna/fitness centre, guest computer/printer, daily housekeeping. Stay & Play Package includes a \$600 resort credit (minimum two nights). Bed & Breakfast includes late checkout. Romance Package includes tropical drinks and Champagne. Fourth night free at times. AAA and seniors discount.

Sunny Isles Beach tourism: 305-792-1952; sunnyisles-beachmiami.com

Symphony of Flavors: \$125 per person or \$900 for table of eight; Saturday, Feb. 29 at 6 p.m.; Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Symphony of Flavors will bring the countryside to Gateway Park on Feb. 29. The evening will feature farm-to-table dining, with produce by Taste of Redland, a local agricultural co-operative, and music by the South Florida Symphony Orchestra.

Gateway Park is Sunny Isles Beach's newest and most dynamic green space. It has an interactive playground, a butterfly garden and a performing arts stage. It's also home to the Gateway Live! performance series, which brings engaging cultural acts from around the world.

For sportier excursions, Oleta River State Park is a centre for paddleboarding and kayaking through mangroves and out into big and breezy Biscayne Bay. Oleta is also great for mountain bikers, walkers, fishermen and picnickers.

rochelle@rochellelash.com

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