

# SIMPLICITY IS LUXURY AT FLORIDA’S HILLSBORO BEACH



**ROCHELLE LASH**  
*Hotel Intel*

Less really is more at Hillsboro Beach Resort, a new getaway along an exclusive and distinctive Atlantic seashore in Greater Fort Lauderdale. It's unpretentious and uncomplicated, yet deluxe in a carefree way.

After a few hours playing sardine on my flight and a fast drive along a high-octane Florida highway, I unwound moments after arriving at Hillsboro.

The lobby is fresh and cool, swathed in white marble with avant-garde curved furniture and quirky modern works by New York artist David Paul Kay. From there, life is easy, because Hillsboro Beach Resort is so compact. Everything is within steps of a central courtyard: a tiny boutique selling sun essentials, a breezy outdoor lounge, the swimming pool and Roï bistro.

I was so seduced by the sight of the ocean, I impulsively scooped up a sparkly red swimsuit at the shop, changed in a flash and commuted all of 10 metres to the Atlantic shore.

“The ocean — and the ocean view — is my favourite feature, too,” said general manager Ann Durso. “It feels like freedom and simply inspires happiness.”

**The hotel:** Opened less than a year ago, Hillsboro delivers coastal comfort with taste and care.

The pool is pristine, the patio furniture top-drawer and the guest rooms restful. It's a convenient getaway for families with young children — the beach is just the right size for making sand castles — and is romantic enough for couples who want a laid-back visit, strolling in the sand, cocooning in a poolside canopy bed or dining à deux.

Hillsboro Beach Resort is a



Hillsboro Beach Resort includes 72 rooms, studios, junior suites and suites, most with balconies and some with ocean views. PHOTOS: HILLSBORO BEACH RESORT

former condo building converted to a medium-size hotel with 72 rooms, studios, junior suites and suites, most with balconies and some with ocean views. The design lines are clean and modern, and the decor is mellow and natural, built around pale wood, creamy walls, linen curtains and white marble bathrooms. Each unit has a kitchenette, with just enough tableware for snacks, a microwave for baby bottles and a mini-fridge to chill a six-pack or a Chardonnay.

**The neighbourhood:** Hillsboro Beach is special in many ways. Tucked between its bigger, friskier neighbours Pompano Beach and Deerfield Beach, it is a relatively secluded oceanfront community of Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Only one road — Hillsboro Mile, a.k.a. Millionaires' Mile — runs through this little realm, which is a long, narrow peninsula free of shops, restaurants and almost any commerce aside from the hotel. I found myself humming the old song *Stuck in the Middle With You*: Majestic mansions to the left of me, extravagant yachts to the right. I was happy in the middle.

For a peek at life beyond Millionaires' Mile, I borrowed a cruiser bike from the hotel and



Do you prefer the pool or the beach? Hillsboro Beach Resort offers both in a tranquil section of Greater Fort Lauderdale.

wheeled along the shared road to the Deerfield Beach International Fishing Pier. It was only 10 a.m. and the corner of Route A1A and 2nd St. was already jumping. The ice cream shops and pizza joints were full, beach volleyball was underway, and my paddle board was ready to go at my favourite surf shop, Island Water Sports.

**Dining:** Open since April, Roï (the Greek word for “flow”) is a small, upscale bistro that currently serves only hotel guests while commercial permits are being worked out.

Roï's indoor/outdoor dining blends perfectly with Hills-

boro's serene beachfront setting. Vianny P. Sanguily of BH3 Management fashioned a look that is lightly marine, with sturdy, stylish chairs of rope and sea-blue leather booths, and fanciful jungle patterned wallpaper à la Henri Rousseau.

Breakfast is the most creative meal of the day, with a fun choice of Boozy French toast with Irish cream mousse; a duck fat grilled cheese sandwich; truffle mushroom omelettes or a banana split with yogurt and berries.

Lunch might be a burger, a club sandwich or Florida snapper tacos, and dinner stays basic — for now — with short ribs, shrimp

IF YOU GO

Hillsboro Beach is halfway between Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and Palm Beach International Airport, which are 30 to 40 minutes away.

**Hillsboro Beach Resort:** 833-980-2924, 954-312-2000, hillsborobeachresort.com, 1159 Hillsboro Mile, Hillsboro Beach, Fla. Pet friendly. Accessible.

**Price:** Rooms in summer start at US\$167; studios and suites from US\$289. Weekend, holiday and winter prices are higher. Resort fee, US\$25. Lodging discount of 20 per cent on three nights or more. Rates include heated pool, beach setups, bathrobes, inflatable paddle board and kayak (one of each), cruiser bicycles, fitness area, guest computer, in-room Lavazza coffee, cribs. Connecting rooms available. Family packages have children's toys. Kiss of Luxury package includes romantic amenities, a photo session, Champagne, dinner, breakfast in bed. Valet parking, US\$25.

**Roï restaurant:** breakfast, lunch, dinner, daily. Indoor/outdoor dining.

**Tourism:** Greater Fort Lauderdale, 954-765-4466, visitflorida.com

cocktails, steak and grilled fish. Kids have their own menu, with desserts like macadamia nut cookies or a s'mores cake.

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