

## Make the Most of Miami Spice

Written by Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin, BT Contributors  
August 2018 - Last Updated August 2018

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Food news we know you can use

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It's August, and you know what that means: Miami Spice is in full effect. South Florida foodies have tons of choices this year, with more than 200 restaurants participating in the two-month event.

Until September 30, guests can enjoy discounted three-course meals at some of Miami's top restaurants. Previously out-of-your-budget restaurants are suddenly affordable, as these

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eateries try to fill seats during the city's slow season.

Here's the thing, though: How do you make the most of these limited-time offers? There's only so much you can eat in such a short period. That's why we have some recommendations that should help you maximize your dollars during Miami Spice.

Our first recommendation: Be flexible. With big names like **Blue Collar** (6730 Biscayne Blvd., 305-756-0366) and **La**

### **Centrale**

(601 S. Miami Ave.) on this year's list, the fight for dinner reservations is fierce. If your preferred venue is too busy during dinner, try to visit for lunch or even brunch (if it's available). You're less likely to encounter crowds during these times, and you'll spend \$23 versus \$39 -- a significant savings.

During these two months, you should also try something new. It's great that your favorite restaurant is participating in Miami Spice again, but keep your palate on its toes with additions like **Alter** (223 NW 23rd St., 305-573-5996), which is offering Miami Spice dinner for the first time; it only offered lunch back in 2016. Here's your chance to try the restaurant's beloved blue crab shumai or to check out any of the other restaurants on the list without breaking the bank. You might even discover a new neighborhood.

One final disclaimer: Always call the place in advance. We can't stress enough how often these menus can change. While the official Miami Spice website does a great job at capturing these changes, it doesn't hurt to double-check; something is bound to fall through the cracks.

## OPENINGS

Miami Spice may be the biggest news right now, but it's not the only news. The city has also welcomed a wave of new eateries that deserve your attention, regardless of their Miami Spice participation.

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Kimpton EPIC Hotel has transformed part of its rooftop into a pop-up restaurant for the rest of summer. Called **EPIC Pop-Up** (270 Biscayne Blvd. Way, 305-351-7403), the temporary establishment allows executive chef Alex Olivier to flex his culinary muscles and cook some upscale Mediterranean cuisine. The menu features both small plates and large bites like stuffed dates, Serrano ham, Spanish suckling pig, and Spanish-style prawns. For cocktails, the pop-up focuses on large-format drinks like shareable punches that are sure to get the party started.

Another recent highlight is **Sette Osteria** (2103 NW 2nd Ave., 305-576-8282), a Washington, D.C., transplant that opened quietly on the southern end of Wynwood. Classic pastas like cacio e pepe and fettuccine alla Bolognese are just a taste of the extensive menu, which also includes pizzas, flatbreads, calzones, and other Italian fare that would make a low-carb dieter balk.

On the other side of town, **Nothing Bundt Cakes** (15400 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 112, 305-974-4536) is now open in Aventura as of Wednesday, August 1. The bakery is celebrating with several community events, including an August 4 promotion of free “bundtlets” (mini bundt cakes) for a year for the first 50 guests. At Nothing Bundt Cakes, customers can pop into the shop to order and pick up everything from bite-sized bundt cakes (“bundtinis”) to bundtlet towers.

The next few months will also hold some fun fare for diners. We’re most excited for **Guy & the Bird** (17070 W. Dixie Hwy.), which will bring yakitori and rotisserie offerings to North Miami Beach in September. Details are sparse at the moment, but we’re confident the nine-foot yakitori grill will be put to good use by chef and owner Roy Starobinsky, who is also behind the popular local restaurant Lettuce & Tomato.

## CLOSINGS

Last month, Brickell said goodbye to a familiar face: **Rosa Mexicano**. The Mexican restaurant, which has occupied the ground floor of Mary Brickell Village for more than a decade, closed

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abruptly. Owners cite lease expiration as the reason. Fans will now have to travel to the Lincoln Road outpost for that famous tableside guac.

*Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin are co-founders of Miami Food Pug, an award-winning South Florida food blog that fuses the couple's love of dogs and food.*

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