

Dine Out on a Budget

Written by Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin, BT Contributors
March 2019 - Last Updated March 2019



You don't have to spend a good chunk of change to enjoy a decent meal out on the town.

Food news we know you can use



Let's be honest: Dining out can add up. A few dollars for lunch, a lot more dollars for dinner. It's an expensive -- yet tasty -- habit. But you don't have to spend a good chunk of change to enjoy a decent meal out on the town. You just have to be a bit more selective.

Take lunch, for instance. Instead of treating yourself to a full sit-down experience, where automatic gratuity and other surprising charges may pop up, stick to fast-casual spots.

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Miami's many food halls are full of budget-friendly options that also don't take up a lot of your time. At **1-800-Lucky** (143 NW 23rd St., 305-768-9826) in Wynwood, you have your choice of poke, dumplings, sushi, and other Asian specialties that fill you up without breaking the bank. Cap your meal with Taiyaki's signature "fish cone" for dessert, and your bill will still be relatively inexpensive.

The same holds true at the Design District's **St. Roch Market** (140 NE 39th St., 786-542-8977), where you can get a fantastic lunch or dinner anywhere in the single digits or low teens. The chicken biscuit at Coop is a prime example of a meal that's equal parts satisfying and economical. Across the hall at Jaffa, you can find dips, falafels, shakshuka, and other Mediterranean fare at reasonable prices. With so much variety to choose from at St. Roch Market, you shouldn't have any trouble finding something that fits your budget.

If you do want an experience that is a little less fast-casual, be on the lookout for specials -- especially at lunch. Case in point: **Novikov** (300 S. Biscayne Blvd., 305-489-1000) in downtown Miami. The Chinese-Japanese eatery is known for its upscale cuisine that commands a premium, but it also offers an affordable \$23 three-course business lunch with ample portions. Executive lunch specials are also big at **Palermo**

Restaurant & Wine Bar

(4582 NE 2nd Ave., 786-502-4460) a few miles up the road; skirt steak, salmon, and fettuccine alfredo are just a few of the selections offered at a discount inside this Argentine establishment.

Lastly, eat sooner rather than later. Frugal foodies know that a happy hour with good deals on food and drinks can be cheaper than dinner. Aventura's **Genuine Pizza** (19565 Biscayne Blvd., #956, 786-472-9170) offers a great one: \$10 pizzas from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays. Pair one with a \$5 beer or \$6 glass of wine, and you have yourself a meal. Prefer more variety?

Tuna's Seafood Restaurant

(17850 W. Dixie Hwy., 305-932-0630) has all sorts of bites available at happy hour prices from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., including coconut shrimp, fried calamari, tuna nachos, and bacon-wrapped scallops.

OPENINGS

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It's a good thing you're saving all that money because Miami's food scene continues to see tremendous growth. On the food hall front, **Citadel** (8300 NE 2nd Ave., 305-908-3849) in Little River is finally open after significant construction delays over the years. This new venue is home to local favorites like Taquiza, which is serving up its signature tacos, and Ash!, a new pizzeria from the Stanzone 87 duo. As for desserts, expect Instagram-worthy pastries from internationally renowned pastry chef Antonio Bachour.

Meanwhile, Mary Brickell Village has gained a new tenant: **North Italia** (900 S. Miami Ave, #111, 786-475-9100). The popular national chain took over the gigantic Oceanaire space, and it's impressive; your jaw will drop at the sheer size of the place, which can hold upward of 300 people. With an array of pastas, pizzas, and other classics like chicken parm on the menu, North Italia should put a smile on the faces of locals still reeling from the loss of Perricone's.

CLOSINGS

Yes, **Perricone's** has finally closed; the iconic Italian restaurant and market had called Brickell home since 1996. Although the neighborhood staple is gone, it's not out. In just a few months, Perricone's will return in a bigger space less than a mile from its original location. We hope it retains the original's charm.

While Perricone's closure is temporary, **Vagabond Sushi Bar's** closure is not. The sushi spot shut down after just a few months in operation. A new concept is currently in the works.

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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