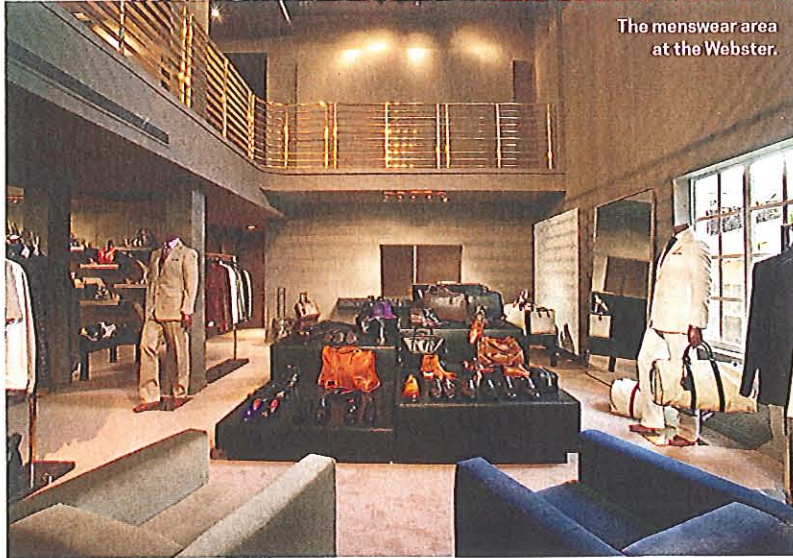


Town & Country

ESTABLISHED IN 1846

ON THE TOWN *In a Miami Mood*



The menswear area at the Webster.

Raw menu items at Eos.



WATCH your back, Paris. These days, there's really no better place than Miami in the spring. South Beach is as glamorous and optimistic as ever, thanks to such sophisticated enclaves of luxury as the **Webster** boutique (1220 Collins Avenue; 305-674-7899; thewebstermiami.com). The three-story fashion emporium made quite a splash when it debuted last summer, offering blue-chip labels of women's and men's ready-to-wear, shoes, jewelry and accessories. Behind the racks of well-chosen pieces by lines that include Lanvin, Balmain, Azzedine Alaïa and Prada, there's a trifecta of talent: Laure Hériard Dubreuil,

Frederic Dechnik and Milan Vukmirovic. The partners transformed the Henry Hohausser-designed 1930s Art Deco hotel into a place that urges shoppers to splurge. And the Webster's on-site outpost of the Parisian eatery **Caviar Kaspia** means the experience doesn't end with the designer names.

While the redone Fontainebleau Miami Beach is an expansive oceanfront resort with loads of dazzle, its **Lapis Spa** (4441 Collins Avenue; 305-674-4772; fontainebleau.com) provides a peaceful respite. Turn back the clock with a rejuvenating Tracie Martyn Resculpting Facial, then enjoy the eucalyptus-infused steam room and the mineral pool.

Basking in the spotlight several blocks south is the shiny new W South Beach, home to a romantic French countryside-inspired outdoor garden known as the **Grove** (2201 Collins Avenue; 305-938-3000; whotels.com/southbeach). Sip pineapple *caipiroskas* amid winding paths with sea-grape trees, swamp lilies and flowering grasses.

Last spring, French chef Laurent Tourondel opened his elegant take on the traditional American chophouse, **BLT**

Steak (1440 Ocean Drive; 305-673-0044; bltsteak.com), in the beautifully overhauled Betsy hotel. His popovers, made with satiny Gruyère, and his buttery cuts of Certified Angus are giving locals incentive to brave tourist-clogged Ocean Drive.

If you're in a trattoria mood, hit **Fratelli la Bufala** (437 Washington Avenue; 305-532-0700; fratellilabufala.com) for its buffalo-milk

mozzarella and ricotta.

Daytime in South Beach usually calls for a stroll down Lincoln Road, where discriminating design fans flock to **Nest** (1020 Lincoln Road; 305-672-9611; nestcasa.com), a chic loft-like shop filled with modern furniture and decorative accessories: *vide-poches* (trays for keys and change), woven-leather baskets and Missoni throws.

On the mainland, the **Miami Design District** is hopping, with new branches of big-name boutiques (e.g., Marni and Christian Louboutin) bordering locally owned favorites such as **En Avance** (161 Northeast 40th Street; 305-576-0056; enavance.net), a shop known for

upscale emerging labels like Jasmine di Milo and Matthew Ames, plus the casual Latin-influenced tapas bar **Sra. Martinez** (4000 Northeast Second Avenue; 305-573-5474; chefmichellebernstein.com), owned by Michelle Bernstein.

But the neighborhood on everyone's GPS is the newly walkable **downtown Miami**, which has blossomed into a hub of high-end restaurants, spas and hotels. Relish the dry-aged, center-cut steaks and bustling outdoor happy-hour scene at **Miami's Chophouse** (300 South Biscayne Boulevard; 305-938-9000; themiamichophouse.com), or dine along the waterfront at the more formal Italian restaurant **Il Gabbiano** (335 South Biscayne Boulevard; 305-373-0063; ilgabbianomiami.com).

The Viceroy Miami's **Spa at Icon Brickell** (485 Brickell Avenue; 305-503-0369; viceroymiami.com) features a water lounge by Philippe Starck. Also at the Viceroy is the Michelin-starred **Eos** (305-503-4400), designed by Kelly Wearstler, where chef Michael Psilakis serves creative tapas. "Like Miami, the restaurant captures the Mediterranean approach to life," he says. "People here really live for the day and enjoy the moment." ✕



Furnishings at Nest.