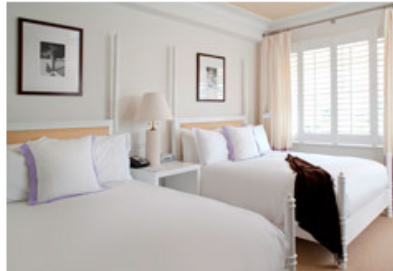


## THE BETSY SOUTH BEACH, MIAMI

By Lisa Oxenham on Tuesday 19 April 2011

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As we sit on the beach sipping on fruit smoothies, planes fly by with huge banners flapping behind, advertising the many pool parties happening right now not more than a couple of blocks away. Another attempts a spot of skywriting, L...A... We take another sip and ponder what it could be trying to spell.



In the lower reaches of the sky, parascenders bob about behind high-powered boats and frisbees whizz above the heads of hard-bodied joggers, volleyball players and sun worshippers. The skywriter continues, D... Y... G...A...G...A... Ah of course, **Lady Gaga**, who else? We are in **South Beach, Miami**, for the busiest week of year – don't expect subtle.



That's not to say, if you really look, you can't find it. Our hotel, **The Betsy**, is one such case in point. Sitting at the north end of **Ocean Drive**, marking the delineation point between its older, lower rise art deco hotels and restaurants and the bigger, concrete and glass resorts of Collins Avenue, it is a **beautiful, boutique oasis of colonial-fronted calm**.

The historic hotel was built in the early 1940s – its colonial façade reflecting the architectural trends of the time – and stands in contrast to the more traditionally **art deco** building associated with this area of **Miami Beach**.

The hotel had a refurbishment in 2009 by **Diamante Pedersoli** – the woman responsible for furnishing **Ralph Lauren's** private residences – and **Carmenlina Sontoro**, who has designed a number of **Bulgari** stores.

The lobby is strewn with colonial-style furniture, including wooden plantation style shutters, sumptuous sofas, ceiling fans, natural fibre rugs, antique globes, potted palms and even **zebra-framed mirrors** – all illuminated by Miami's stunning light that streams in through **The Betsy's** huge **floor-to-ceiling windows**.

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Our room is light and airy, even without an ocean view, with huge comfortable beds, another fantastic sofa, a bathroom stocked with high end **Malin+Goetz products**, a massive walk-in shower and even a TV built into the bathroom mirror – so you can brush up on current affairs while you brush your teeth. But perhaps my favourite touch were beautiful **white window shutters** that make you feel you are about to embark on some great seaside adventure every time you wake up.

The hotel's **roof deck** offers sweeping, unobstructed views of the Atlantic and features a relaxing, **Wellness Garden** offering a range of beauty treatments, yoga and herbal teas. And there is a small but very peaceful pool if the bustle of the beach becomes too much.

With just **61 rooms and a high staff to guest ratio**, you really notice the attention to detail at **The Betsy**. This ranges from the service in the wonderful **BLT Steak restaurant** (a finessed version of the classic US steak house) to the concierge who tirelessly ferry our not insubstantial luggage about or fetch buckets of ice to our room. And perhaps the biggest giveaway of great service, we popped into the place a few days after checking out and were **welcomed like old friends**.

For a hotel to still feel cool, calm, collected and classy in the midst of all the craziness of Miami's Music Week and Spring Break is testament to what a gem of a place this is.

**Nightly rates at The Betsy Miami start at 229 USD per night room only, excluding tax and service. Contact [Small Luxury Hotels of the World](#) to book.**

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