

## Destination: Miami



Courtesy of the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

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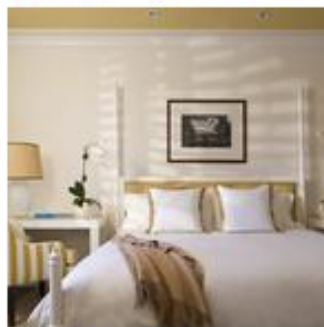
### Boutique

#### The Betsy

1440 Ocean Drive [map it »](#)

(305) 531-6100

[www.thebetsyhotel.com](http://www.thebetsyhotel.com)



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From the exterior, the Betsy's colonial architecture seems an odd fit for Miami's Art Deco-heavy South Beach. At its core, though, the Ocean Drive newcomer has discovered a nice alternative to the 400-plus room towers continue to rise along the Atlantic. The Betsy provides a more intimate option for travelers who want proximity to South Beach's trendy restaurants and bars but prefer not to share a roof with a thousand other guests. The Betsy has just sixty-three rooms and suites, each furnished comfortably and simply, with crisp, white Frette linens, custom walnut floors, plantation shutters and LCD televisions. Although the accommodations aren't wildly spacious, they provide exactly what most of the Betsy's guests want – a pretty place to park their luggage while they hit the town.

The Betsy also has a small but simple fitness room and an appealing rooftop spa, where massages are given in simple cabanas constructed from bamboo poles and flowing linens. The lobby houses **BLT Steak**, a trendy and tasty new hotspot, but real insiders know the place to be at night is the invite-only lounge hidden behind unmarked doors in the basement. There's no guaranteed way to gain access, but word is that, like everything else in Miami, dressing well and asking nicely certainly won't hurt.



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**EDITOR'S NOTE, SEPTEMBER 2011:** I recently stayed at the Betsy and was very pleased. For one, the hotel's location, on Ocean Drive, is fabulous: central but away from the tacky bars that line it further down. I stayed in a Master Suite, with a nice, but petite, living room with a couch and a TV. Rooms have a lot of character thanks to such details as the grass cloth wallpaper on the ceilings, the blooming orchid that matched the drapes and the walnut floors.

If you're considering a stay here, it's good to know that the bedrooms, regardless of the room category, are relatively small. But the space is used wisely, so it really doesn't feel claustrophobic. Unlike most of the hotels on Ocean Drive, there wasn't a lot of street noise. However, the pretty wood floors did not provide quite enough padding to muffle the sounds of light footsteps upstairs in the morning. The white marble bathrooms are gorgeous and outfitted with a television in the mirror and Malin + Goetz products. Another great touch was the mini-bar, stocked with such goodies as Dylan's Candy, Banana Moon cookies, and Miss Vickie's chips. Be aware that the "city view" is actually an alley view. I ended up just leaving the shades down the whole time, which wasn't a big deal since the room was quite bright and pleasant. However, it's best to request a pool or ocean view.

The rooftop has a gorgeous view and feels secluded and private. One night, my husband and I were the only people to have cocktails up there. The pool isn't anything to write home about, but it is peaceful, relatively vacant, and clean, which is—shockingly—a rarity in Miami. Located in the central courtyard, the pool area is pretty much shaded for the majority of the day, so guests gravitate towards The Betsy's section of the beach, which is lined with comfortable beach chairs. After eating a delicious breakfast at BLT Steak, the Betsy's restaurant, it was heavenly to bask in the sun and relax until lunch.

The Betsy is a completely different experience than staying at one of the larger Miami hotels. You won't find all of the amenities of a bigger hotel, but it's more personal and chic. For my trip, it was the perfect Miami balance: it was easy to be in the Miami scene (daytime and nighttime), but I also really appreciated the calm, classy atmosphere when I returned to the hotel. ~PAIGE CLARKE

**Indagare Tip:** When staying at The Betsy, you must visit the private party room downstairs and touch the ceiling. I don't want to give too much away, but it is very surprising.

[Henley Vazquez](#)