

In Miami, the Brainy Side of the Beach

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Mural by Shepard Fairey, part of Wynwood Walls, a constantly changing street art exhibit splashed across 80,000 square feet of exterior walls. Moris Moreno for The New York Times

Cultured Traveler

By ELAINE GLUSAC

On the kind of balmy February evening that draws snowbirds by the flocks to South Florida, I split from the flip-flop crowd clogging Lincoln Road Mall in Miami Beach and veered one block north to the New World Center. The Frank Gehry-designed glass and steel symphony hall opened in 2011, and at once established South Beach as a cultural destination. A cluster of patrons formed a white-haired clot in front of the box office where I learned that the evening's program, a recital by a third-year horn fellow with the center's New World Symphony, was sold out. True, it was a free event, but it required reservations and Dominic Rotella, the musician, was apparently the hottest ticket in town.

"Get in line," a reedy patron said, indicating the informal queue of unfortunates around him. "You're number seven."

If a sellout at a musical fellow's concert is any indication, Miami craves culture. Now, thanks to a robust economy and a legacy bestowed by [Art Basel](#) — the immensely popular art event established in 2002 that returns Dec. 3 to 6 this year — Miami has accrued a critical mass of cultural attractions. From the Pérez Art Museum Miami to the thriving muralist district of Wynwood, Miami has developed a brainy complement to its long-established beach allure. And there's more on the horizon. Faena Forum, a 50,000-square-foot exhibit space designed by Rem Koolhaas, is set to open in April, and the Bass Museum of Art, currently closed for renovation, will add 50 percent more space with four new galleries when it opens next fall. Together, the newcomers offer rich cultural fodder outside Art Basel season if courting skin cancer isn't your idea of vacation.



The New World Center was designed by Frank Gehry and is home to the New World Symphony. Moris Moreno for The New York Times

