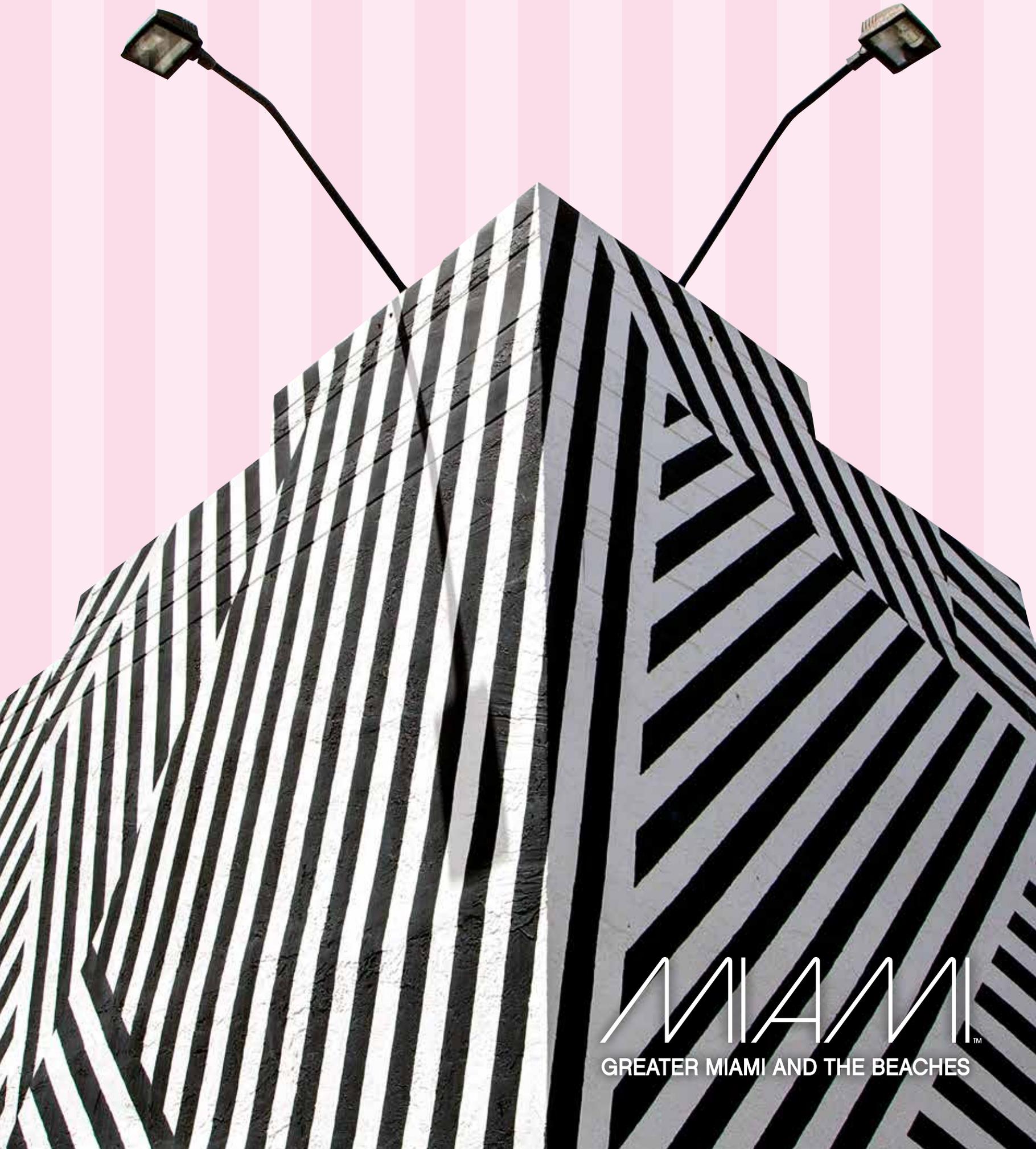


# THE PINK PALM

SUMMER 2019

The LGBTQ Travel Insider for Greater Miami and the Beaches



MIAMI™  
GREATER MIAMI AND THE BEACHES

# WELCOME...

It's time for another summer adventure – and what better place to make that happen than in Greater Miami! Here, you'll be able to enjoy the afterglow of Pride Month and ease into July with all sorts of fabulous offers. Make sure to visit [MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com), which is "mission control" for summer offers. It features hotel deals to suit every taste, a plethora of spa treatments and dining options at more than 200 restaurants. This just points to the fact that summertime can be the best time in Greater Miami and the Beaches!

In this issue of The Pink Palm, you'll meet Chef Rocco Carulli and Chef Alex Rodil, both of whom are doing their best to make Miami one of the best tasting cities in the country. We'll also explore Miami's Queer Scene, which is making waves in the city's nightlife. Today, the city has opened its arms to the underground community, where anything goes!

Next, we speak to Damian Pardo, the mastermind behind Gay8 Festival, which in only four years has become the largest Hispanic LGBTQ festival in the U.S. It's the perfect excuse to come back in February! Finally, we'll Gayther around at Hôtel Gaythering, the gayest hotel in Miami Beach. This local gem shares with us their commitment to provide resources and events to help improve the LGBTQ community. See you in Miami!

Stop by and visit the LGBT Visitor Center for local and visitor information. Feel free to use the Michael Anthony Lucas Computer Center and our free Wi-Fi.

## LGBT Visitor Center

1130 Washington Ave., 1st Floor North  
Miami Beach, FL 33139  
305/397-8914 • [GoGayMiami.com](http://GoGayMiami.com)

**Hours of Operation:**  
Mon-Fri: 9 A.M. – 6 P.M.  
Sat & Sun: 11 A.M. – 4 P.M.



MIAMI-DADE  
GAY & LESBIAN  
CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE  
A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION

305/673-4440  
[GayBizMiami.com](http://GayBizMiami.com)

The Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (MDGLCC) is the largest not-for-profit corporation in the county for gay and lesbian businesses. MDGLCC offers the Pink Flamingo Hospitality Certification by training and certifying hospitality service professionals on issues related to gender and orientation, and giving them tools to respond appropriately to all people. This is essential for creating environments where all visitors and employees are welcome.

For a list of Pink Flamingo Certified Hotels and Businesses in Greater Miami and the Beaches, please visit [GayBizMiami.com](http://GayBizMiami.com)

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This publication was produced by the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau, with the support of the Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.



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For information about Greater Miami and the Beaches, visit [MiamiandBeaches.com](http://MiamiandBeaches.com).



# MIAMI'S SPICY CHEFS

Two chefs doing their best to make Miami one of the best tasting cities in the country!

by IAN MALONEY

For the nation's LGBTQ community, summertime means one thing – PRIDE! Greater Miami and the Beaches is marking 50 years of Pride by highlighting the culinary genius of two chefs that call the region home. Make sure to check them out – your taste buds will thank us later.



**Chef Rocco**

## Rocco Carulli, Executive Chef, R House

Chef Rocco's parents come from Puglia, at the southern tip of Italy. "Food and gastronomy have always played a huge role in my life," says Rocco. "From my mother I learned about fruit and vegetables perusing the local markets and from my dad I learned my butchering skills," he adds. The influences of his Italian heritage can be seen in the R House menu today. As a young adult, Rocco started his career in accounting and banking, but soon realized that he couldn't stay out of the kitchen. After spending some time on the New York and San Francisco restaurant scenes, he settled down in Provincetown, Massachusetts where he owned and operated a restaurant called Edwige At Night for 13 years.

After many visits to Miami, Chef Rocco decided he wanted to open a new venue that would be open year-round, in contrast to the seasonal business of Provincetown. To our luck, he came across Wynwood and immediately knew that he wanted to part of the Wynwood movement, and what was an empty warehouse was transformed into what is now R House. "It is so exciting to be part of the cultural,

artistic and gastronomical explosion that the neighborhood has become," says Rocco.

R House opened in January 2014 and, soon after, its Drag Brunch was born. "What makes our drag brunch so special is that we not only have a huge LGBTQ following, but an equally enthusiastic straight customer base also," says Rocco. R House is a place where everyone comes together to kick back, indulge and be entertained. *Be sure to check out R House in Miami's renowned Wynwood neighborhood. Find out more at [RHouseWynwood.com](http://RHouseWynwood.com)*

## Chef Alex Rodil, Chef/Owner, On The Fly

Chef Alex Rodil has made a name for herself as she has risen through the kitchen ranks. This Cuban-American, true blue Miami native has really found her niche after taking on the Food Network's "Chopped" as well as "Cutthroat Kitchen." She also spent a year on the high seas working as a personal chef on a yacht. She now operates On The Fly, where she continues her work as a private chef at private events throughout the region.

When asked about how she got interested in cooking, she mentioned that she's been reading cookbooks and trying new recipes on her family since she was little. "I think I've always been interested in food and cooking. I can remember back to when I was younger, buying little simple cookbooks and trying those recipes out on my family. I must've been about eight or nine years old. As the years went by, I started to develop my own cooking style swaying away from the traditional Cuban food and heading more into the realm of other cultures.

It took Chef Alex a while to decide she wanted to be a professional chef though. "I started my career, actually, a little late in the game," she says. "I finally decided to go to culinary school back in 2007 at the advice of another chef friend, who had noticed that I had some real interest in cooking for others. Now, my favorite dish to make has to be my short ribs – they are rich and homey, but refined and



**Chef Alex**

elegant. I put a few spices in the braising liquid and freshen it up with citrus zest that ends up balancing the dish so beautifully. I also love that it's one of my favorite cooking methods, the slow and low. You can give a lot of TLC when you're developing and building layers of flavors over hours."

These days, Chef Alex is marching to the beat of her own drum and she loves every minute of it. "I'm a private chef now so I have the luxury of being able to work in kitchens that actually have windows and beautiful views. When I'm on location doing a gig, it's great to get out and explore the area. When I'm home, I like to actually be low key and spend time with family and friends, usually eating, it's so much fun. I still love the feeling of finding a great place to eat. I did say I'm a bona fide foodie, right? I love to find the dives and eat the food the locals make. There is no better way to learn authentic cuisines than watching how others make their dishes come to life. Here in Miami, I would say Dragonfly Izakaya & Fish Market in Doral is amazing. Also, I love Beaker & Gray in Wynwood. The great thing about Miami is that great food is all around." *Check out Chef Alex on Instagram, or for inquiries, drop her a line at [chefalexr@gmail.com](mailto:chefalexr@gmail.com)*

When it comes to creativity and originality, Miami stands at the vanguard, and Chef Rocco and Chef Alex are really representing for the LGBTQ community as they lead us into a future that is sure to taste delicious! 🌸

Get your fill of Miami Spice this summer – visit [MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com)



# MIAMI'S

# QUEER

# SCENE

## MAKING WAVES IN THE CITY'S NIGHTLIFE

Anybody who's part of Miami's queer scene won't hesitate to tell you that while the queer community here is anything but new, recent years have certainly seen it flourish and grow beyond anyone's expectations. Today, the city's underground has come alive with vibrant, one-of-a-kind contributions from the queer community, defying every expectation and opening doors for a new kind of nightlife where everyone can find a place.

### Shifts in the Miami LGBTQ Community

During the 1980s and 90s, South Beach became a gay mecca of sorts, gracing the silver screen in films like Robin Williams' "The Birdcage." The signature pastel colorway and sandy beaches may have stayed the same, but South Beach started seeing changes in the LGBTQ community, with its expansion across the intracoastal waterway into Miami's mainland.

"At the time I arrived here [in 1989], Miami Beach was quiet except for a few nightclubs and galleries," explains Danilo de la Torre, known by many in the queer and drag scene as "Adora." Torre says, "The people felt a kind of freedom of expression. They felt like they had nothing to prove and nobody to impress — they could be totally themselves."

### A Queer Scene that Welcomes All

As it turned out, this open attitude was exactly what was needed to prompt a subtle yet seismic shift in Miami's queer scene, nurturing it into the unique and thriving underground world it is today.

While Miami had long been accepting of the gay community, many local queer and gender-

nonconforming people had found it difficult to find understanding in the mainstream. For years, they had opted to abandon Miami for more open-minded cities like San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles. But then, it seemed that more and more were electing to stay rather than leave, deciding to create their own Miami community where self-expression in any shape or form would be welcomed.

Now, Miami's queer scene has become a place where anyone is welcome, especially people who may have previously felt like they didn't fit into more traditional gay spaces. A growing number of nightclubs, venues, and performers have breathed new life into the city's nightlife, pushing traditional boundaries in performance, music, art, and fashion. It has evolved into a creative refuge for a diverse community of queer and gender-nonconforming people, welcoming the transgender community, different body types, and people of color with open arms.

### Reshaping the Miami Queer Community

Jupiter Velvet, a trans-femme performer who proudly defies all expectations of what being transgender "should" look like, says, "We have full control and dominion over our performances because we belong to such a free scene — and a free scene that we created for ourselves." Refusing to adhere to the idea that she should try to appear as a cisgender woman, Jupiter says, "I get told all the time: 'Why don't you shave? I don't understand what you are doing.' If that's your way of thinking, then this is not the space for you. You can set

your own beauty standards and own rules to live by, and you can break them if you want."

What began with a few experimental performances has gradually transformed into a flourishing queer scene in Miami, featuring a handful of regular queer events like Dollhouse Presents at Churchill's Pub, Gramps' Double Stubble, This Free Life's Club Koi, and MissCellaneous at Villain Theater. At these events and others like them, gender is open to experimentation — and creativity, passion, and respect aren't just encouraged, they're expected.

When de la Torre arrived in Miami in the late 80s, his performances as Adora were inspired by the club-kids culture of New York rather than the hyper-feminine drag culture that Miami was host to at that time. As de la Torre says, bringing this style to Miami may have initially raised some eyebrows, but he and his friends were eventually accepted as part of the scene. "We had no idea that we were setting a trend or being weird," de la Torre says. "We were just doing what was fun and what we wanted to do."

Today, the city has opened its arms to the underground community, where anything goes. As Christian Acevedo, a newbie to Miami's queer scene explains, "It doesn't matter what your sexual orientation or gender identity is, you're accepted. You want to express yourself. People are going to appreciate that." It's that openness, sense of welcoming, and undeniable desire to live freely that will undoubtedly continue to propel Miami's queer scene to new and colorful heights. ✨



# LGBTQ Annual Events

For exact dates, websites and additional information, go to [VisitMiamiLGBTQ.com](http://VisitMiamiLGBTQ.com)

## TransArt

Jan

## Gay8 Festival

Feb

## Winter Party Festival

Feb/Mar

## Miami Beach Pride

Apr

## Fling Women's Weekend

Apr

## OUTshine Film Festival

Apr

## Sizzle Miami

May

## Sweet Heat Miami

May

## Out in the Tropics

May/Jun

## Wynwood Pride

Jun

## Aqua Girl

Oct

## Celebrate Orgullo

Oct

## Hialeah Pride

Oct

## White Party

Nov

## Circuit Miami

Nov/Dec

## Art Gaysel

Dec

# BRINGING A QUEER EVENT TO LITTLE HAVANA

Miami's Damian Pardo, LGBTQ Activist and Organizer, brings the city's diverse communities together to celebrate Pride.

by IAN MALONEY

Every once in a while, a community hero comes along and really changes the game for a group of people. For folks in Little Havana and for Miami's LGBTQ community, one of those people is Damian Pardo, a local businessman and activist who dared to dream of a queer event outside of gay-friendly Miami Beach.

Pardo, who is a Miami native of Cuban and Spanish descent, wanted to show the greater community what he and his diverse group of friends already understood: that we are much more united than is portrayed and that our diversity as a community at large, not just within the LGBTQ community, is something we should come together to celebrate.

"I see my role as just one of many people who care about our South Florida community, its issues, our progress and prosperity and our overall well-being," he says. "Specific to the LGBTQ community, I see my role as someone who transitions between many communities, understands business and non-profit organizations, and has a solid background in helping to organize community and work toward a purpose."

In 2013, Pardo was having a *cafecito* in Little Havana with his friend Joe Cardona, when the two began wondering how to bring the LGBTQ community and its straight allies together along with the amazing vibrant culture that Little Havana has to offer. They wanted to highlight the sounds, the food, the art, and theatre to show that the LGBTQ community is everywhere in every single neighborhood in Miami. Thus Gay8 (pronounced Gay Ocho) was born. With a massive amount of legwork, the first Gay8 Festival took place in 2014 and was a raging success. Not surprisingly, it has continued to grow each year since.

"We originally set out to create an event that brought the different South Florida communities together," says Pardo. For the first few years Gay8 was a lot like other festivals



Photo by Carina Mask

that shut down the neighborhood's famous Calle 8 (SW 8th Street), just with a rainbow flair, and perhaps a few more guys with their shirts off. Thanks to Pardo's hard work along with the team he has built to organize the event, however, Gay8 has become much more than just a street party.

"This community is important to me because there is so much work to do," says Pardo. "There are so many important community issues like climate, homelessness, addiction, education, immigration, transgender rights, etc. with little attention and/or understanding. These issues affect all of us. To the extent that community interest and resources are lacking, we all pay a heavy price." The Gay8 Festival is a platform. It's meant to be a fun-filled day with the purpose of directly or indirectly connecting diverse communities, spurring intellectual curiosity or just creating a safe space to enjoy your day.

There are hundreds of events in Miami – Gay8 Festival was not started to just be another money-making venture for business. It was

very intentionally developed to help us learn about each other and spend time together.

"I believe it has been so successful because when people come, they are genuinely surprised with who shows up – all kinds of people from all walks of life," says Pardo. "Many people reference a 'happiness, lightness or love in the air' – I think that's because when they see the streets filled with so many people from all walks of life, it just automatically gives them hope we can all move forward together. The future looks good. The community is maturing, addressing more issues head on and building more bridges with other groups. There is a lot of work to do so to the extent more people get involved, the brighter the prospects."

Thanks to community members like Damian Pardo, Greater Miami is a better place for all. His leadership and selfless dedication to the causes the area faces make him someone who should be emulated. He helps to bridge the gap between all the groups that make this city such a beautiful place to live and visit. 🌸

# GAYTHER AROUND...

Hôtel Gaythering strives to make a difference in the LGBTQ community.



Bears and Hares Fridays



Karaoke Mondays with Karla Croqueta

Photos Courtesy of Hôtel Gaythering

Hôtel Gaythering is a gay-owned, adults-only hotel located on the west end of Miami Beach's famous Lincoln Road. Featuring uniquely designed "handsome industrial" spaces, a men's spa, weekly events, and surprisingly affordable rates, this 25-room hotel is a gem for visitors and locals alike. However, what makes the Gaythering so unique is that it is much more than a hotel. As the name suggests, it's a gathering place for the community, a resource for health information, as well as a place where people can go to get information about a wide range of topics that are of interest to the LGBTQ community, especially the region's gay men.

You will notice a difference at the Gaythering the second you walk in the door. As they say, "no velvet ropes, no guest lists, and no smoking." However, the differences don't stop there, as the goal of this "friendly gay hotel" is to really make a difference in the community. To that end, the staff strives to get involved, from sponsoring a gay sports league with more than 200 members to stepping up when organizations throughout the county need support.

Hôtel Gaythering periodically puts on events that aim to give support and provide health

resources for the local LGBTQ community. This programming includes a monthly "Pillow Talk," in partnership with Health Promotion And Care – HPAC, which is hosted by special guests that lecture about and engage attendees on curated topics. Taking place every 3rd Tuesday of the month, previous topics have included "The 5 love languages" with Dr. Jason Wasser of The Family Room Wellness Associates, and "relationship expectations" with Dr. Daniel Sheridan. They also hosted a "So I'm on PreP, Now What?" event with Dr. Damon L. Jacobs about biomedical interventions as foundations for improving communication, increasing connection, and enhancing pleasure. The hotel even hosted a Dating Boot camp with Dr. Denise Fournier of Evergreen Therapy, and a forum about regaining faith, hosted by Rabbi Lyle Rothman of University of Miami Hillel and Spiritual Advisor Harold Marrero of No Reservations Group.

After recognizing the importance of knowing your status, the hotel offers complimentary STI testing on site with Latinos Salud on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 6 to 11 p.m. Hôtel Gaythering's commitment to the LGBTQ Community is undeniable.

At the bar, find drink specials all week long, as well as activities like Karaoke Monday nights, trivia night on Wednesdays and the now famous Bears and Hares party on Friday nights. They even offer a free shuttle to Miami's naturist beach – Haulover Park, the area's premier gay beach (straights go there too!) AND they will even let you bring one of their beach umbrellas to make sure you don't get too much sun on your unmentionables! The shuttle leaves daily at 10:30 a.m. and is available to the public, but space is first reserved for guests of the hotel.

Perhaps the most charming aspect of Hôtel Gaythering is that the owners are very hands on. Both Stephán Ginez and Alex Guerra can be found on property on a daily basis managing various projects and aspects of the hotel. Being a small, locally run, community business really makes all the difference in the ability to give excellent service. It is clear that all of their hard work is paying off, so if you are looking for a place where you can be yourself while taking advantage of all that Miami Beach has to offer, look no further than the Gaythering. 🌸

# SUMMER 2019 IN MIAMI

Making the most of your time in Miami this summer



## JULY

3/16-9/1

**Queer Miami: A History of LGBTQ Communities**

[HistoryMiami.org](http://HistoryMiami.org)

6/1-9/30

**Miami Hotel Months**

[MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com)

7/1-8/31

**Miami Spa Months**

[MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com)

Through 7/28

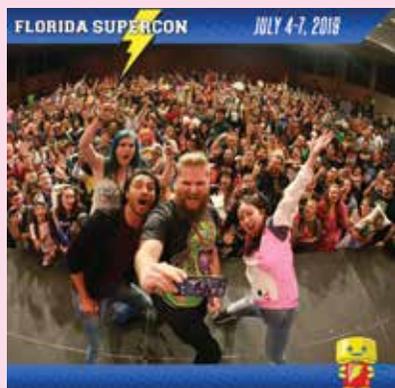
**Amparo**

[TheAmparoExperience.com](http://TheAmparoExperience.com)

7/4

**Fourth of July Celebrations**

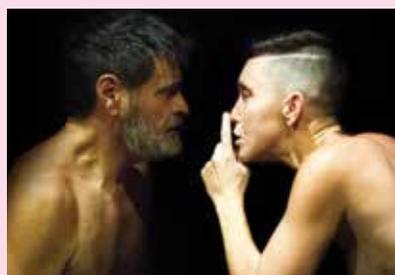
[MiamiandBeaches.com](http://MiamiandBeaches.com)



7/4-7

**Florida SuperCon**

[FloridaSupercon.com](http://FloridaSupercon.com)



7/11-28

**International Hispanic Theatre Festival of Miami**

[TeatroAvante.org](http://TeatroAvante.org)

7/13

**Overtown Music and Arts Festival**

[OvertownMusicArtsFestival.com](http://OvertownMusicArtsFestival.com)

7/13-14

**International Mango & Tropical Fruit Festival**

[FairchildGarden.org](http://FairchildGarden.org)



7/13-16

**SwimShow**

[SwimShow.com](http://SwimShow.com)

7/20

**MegaRumba**

[MegaRumba.com](http://MegaRumba.com)



7/27-28

**South Beach Mango Festival**

[SoBeMangoFest.com](http://SoBeMangoFest.com)



7/27-8/18

**International Ballet Festival of Miami**

[InternationalBalletFestival.org](http://InternationalBalletFestival.org)

7/31

**Miami Spice Kickoff**

[MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com)

## AUGUST

8/1-9/30

**Miami Spice Months**

[MiamiTemptations.com](http://MiamiTemptations.com)

8/2-4

**African Diaspora Dance and Drum Festival of Florida**

[ADDDFF.DelouAfrica.org](http://ADDDFF.DelouAfrica.org)

8/16

**National Rum Day Fest**

[NationalRumDayFest.com](http://NationalRumDayFest.com)



8/17

**The Coconut Grove Food & Wine Festival**

[CoconutGroveFoodandWine.com](http://CoconutGroveFoodandWine.com)

## SEPTEMBER



9/14

**South Florida Craft Beer Run**

[SouthFloridaCraftBeerRun.com](http://SouthFloridaCraftBeerRun.com)

9/14-9/21

**Brazilian Film Festival**

[BrazilianFilmFestival.com](http://BrazilianFilmFestival.com)



9/14/19-1/5/20

**Art After Stonewall**

[Frost.FIU.edu](http://Frost.FIU.edu)

For a full list of events in Greater Miami, please visit:

[MiamiandBeaches.com/events](http://MiamiandBeaches.com/events)