

VOGUE

APRIL \$3.00

Special Issue

Fashion's New Deal

500 Choices from \$5 to \$500

Plus Great Buys in Beauty, Travel, Fitness,
Food, Design, and More



vogue style

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living

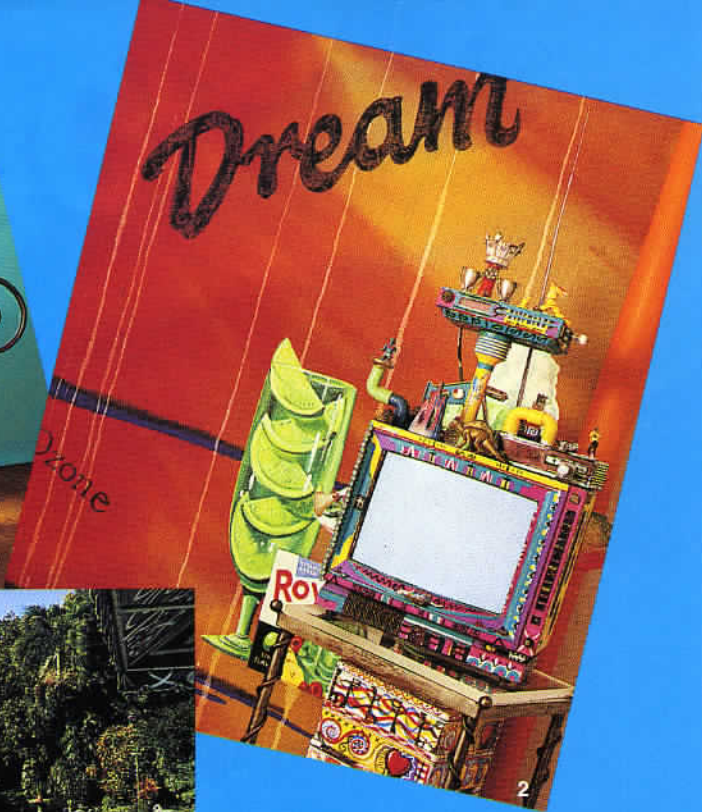


miami news

As hot as Havana in its heyday, Miami's South Beach—a quirky mix of kitsch and high-style chic—is not only the hippest watering hole this side of the Atlantic, it's surprisingly affordable.

William Norwich tests the waters, and **Todd Eberle** snaps the scene

Twister: In Kenny Scharf's fifties-style house in Miami, the artist's daughter Malia strikes a playful pose on a 1956 George Nelson Marshmallow sofa. One of her father's 1988 paintings, *Oh Glob*, hangs above. Malia's dress by children's designer Jocelyn Meintser. Details, see In This Issue. ▶ 436



Tropical punch: 1. In Scharf's Miami sitting room, his sci-fi steel-and-velvet sofa with his Happy pillows is combined with his untitled 1987 painting and 1992 Cosmic rug. 2. Scharf's *Royal Dream*, 1990, serves as a backdrop for his customized TV. 3. Scharf underwater. 4. Scharf's 1988 chairs, lamp, and his 1990 painting, *Shopping for Cactus in the Desert*. 5. Daughter Zena's bedroom includes a painted bunk bed and works by her father, and a chair from the 1967 World's Fair, with Scharf touches.

It's been official for two years at least: Miami's hip, hot South Beach section is the American Riviera. But South Beach isn't a place where you park your Vuitton with the nanny. You won't leave after a holiday here remembering the facials, the fat-free feed, or the hydrotherapy—unless you apply that last term to a lover's kiss in the teeming turquoise surf during a disco dawn.

Miami is a cheap date.

"It's like the fifties in Capri," says designer Gianni Versace, who is renovating a 1920s sun palace here and whose ode in book form, *South Beach Stories* (Leonardo De Luca, Rome), is out this month. "Everything is fresh, and the attitude is beautiful. You don't need to go to the cinema. You just watch the people and it is like taking pictures, and everyone is equal. You don't need to be rich to be special. It's real freedom."

"There definitely are options," adds photographer Todd Eberle. "You can start at the top by staying at a deluxe hotel for \$150 a night or check into something shabby chic for \$30 a night. You'll still have the same good time."

Of course, it's all relative, but prices *are* low in Miami Beach. Despite the renovation and real estate revival we've all read about, you can still find fresh-air aeries to buy for less than \$30,000; and at the best dress shop in South Beach, Findings, which showcases the wares and accessories of 12 local Miami designers, almost nothing costs more than \$500.

"I spend less here than I did in New York, and I have bedrooms, yards, bathrooms. . . I like that," says Kenny Scharf. The artist, his wife, Tereza, and their daughters, Zena and Malia, left New York last year when they bought their Florida house. Since their arrival, the Scharfs have become something akin to first couple in South Beach's social Camelot. Most recently they involved themselves in a bistro called Aqua, where the artist designed the juice bar. (Juice bars are the coffee shops of Miami Beach.)

Say you have one day to do Miami Beach on a budget. You might rise ▶ 438

Off the deep end: Scharf enjoys an atypical poolside barbecue with his wife, Tereza, and Zena. The artist customized the pool and awnings. The backflip sculpture is by Keith Haring. His carnival-stripe silk Charmeuse shirt and Tereza's cotton halter top and studded Barlequin hot pants by Todd Oldham.





Doug Meyer's Beach News



Vintage treasures from Last Tango in Paradise



Gianni Versace's future digs, Casa Casuarina

at the Raleigh hotel, go for a dip in the pool, take in the sun, then hit the shops. At Last Tango in Paradise on Washington Avenue you will find fabulous vintage clothes and accessories, including beaded bags and Lily Pulitzer frocks. (This is the store where so many designers get their, well, inspirations.) Nearby is the good shop Findings, and across the way is everyone's gym of choice, Club Body Tech, owned by Peter Rana. Beach News, owned by Doug Meyer, is an oasis of media and fashion where adjacent to the latest issues of *iHOLA!* and *The New Republic* are sold ties by his brother, the New York designer Gene Meyer. Go to the Century hotel for drinks, snoop at Versace's renovation in progress, ponder properties with "in" real estate agent Esther Percal, stop at Jason Rubell's gallery full of works by new artists with young prices, consider a tattoo at Lou's, play pool at Club Deuce, then pick your dance palace: Byblos for the mix, or Warsaw, Paragon, Torpedo.

What about food? Well, fine dining just isn't really part of the South Beach experience. As artist Ross Bleckner says, "There's the Miami diet. You hurry up to make your reservation in some trendy spot and then lose weight waiting for the food to come!"

It doesn't really matter. Eat an orange instead, and you'll look even better in your bikini in the morning. ●

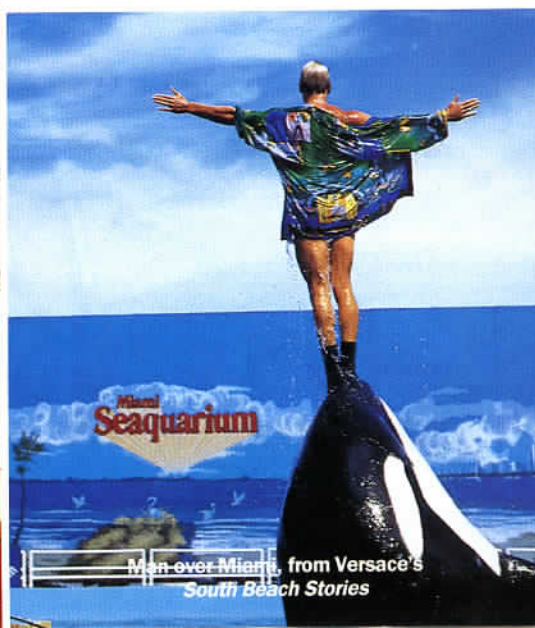
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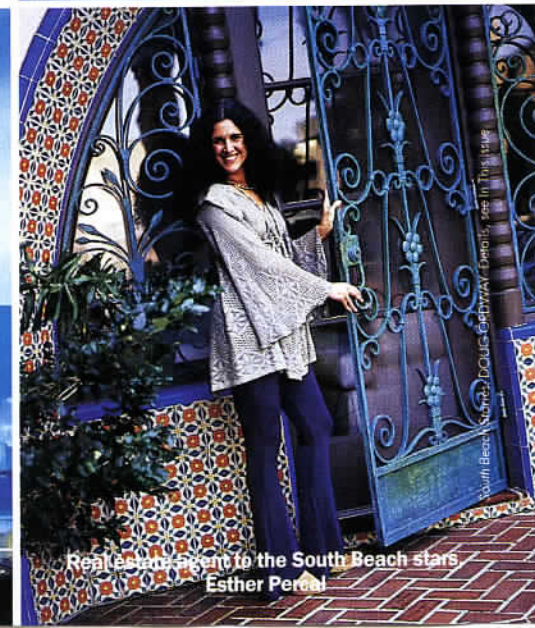
Shopping on Collins Avenue



Mayra Gonzalez, proprietress of South Beach's Findings



Men over Miami, from Versace's *South Beach Stories*



Real estate agent to the South Beach stars Esther Percal