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Miami has one of the most diverse restaurant scenes in America. From traditional American steak and chops to the unique Floribbean cuisine, Miami has something for everyone. Here are just a few of my suggestions for both the adventurous and the more conservative diners. For those staying on after the conference, I have compiled a list of interesting spots in Key West. Contact me for details. Bon appétit.

Timo**—Italian for "thyme"—Robust Mediterranean flavours—wood roasted meats—Don't miss the Parmesan Dumplings.

Yucca—Nuevo Latina hotspot—Try the Yucca relleno or Guava ribs.

Porcao—S. American meat market; a traditional Brazilian Churrascaria.

Big Fish—A local "gem" very hard to find in a somewhat remote location on the waterfront. Stunning view of the Miami skyline—fresh fish daily. Watch the boat traffic along the Miami River.

Grazie—Old school Northern Italian—solid and delicious main courses and affordable prices.

Big Pink—Everything is pink. Wholesome, inexpensive American food.

Casa Tua—"insider's find" Sophisticated yet simple Italian. No sign, so look for the crowd. Very tough table to land, eat outside under the mature trees if the weather cooperates. Try the risotto w/ truffles and seared diver scallops w/artichoke puree. The lamb chops are expensive but absolutely fabulous. Can't miss with the steaks or pasta either.

Joe Allen—local hangout. One of the best martinis in town.

Nemo—a "Best Choice" Asian w/ Latin American influences. Menu often changes, so call ahead. Citrus cured salmon rolls w/tabiko caviar and wasabi mayo or wok charred salmon are winners.

Pascal on Ponce—a "Gem" in Coral Gables. Start with the gnocchi appetizer w/ mushrooms, and move on to the oven-roasted duck w/ poached pears. Other delights include: milk fed veal loin, the diver sea scallops or beef short ribs. An impressive wine list.

Joe's Stone Crab—Overrated, but still one of Miami's most famous spots. Stubbornly refuses to accept reservations, therefore expect drudgingly long waits for marginal food, but always a good time. Reportedly Miami's best key lime pie.

Osteria te Teatro*** One of the oldest and best Italian restaurants in Miami. Can't miss with one of the specials. Allow the waiters to order for you, they are never wrong.

China Grill*--Family style Chinese—try the sake marinated chicken and the wasabi mashed potatoes.

Nobu—One of the best sushi places in the world—Chef's choice is the Omakase—Another very tough seat to obtain.

“New” to Miami

Divito South Beach—Danny diVito, owner. Pricy, pretentious, but very good Italian chop house. Beware: Huge portions.

Michael's Genuine Food and Drink*** Unpretentious yet hip place to be. Stellar Modern American cuisine with reasonable prices. Michael's uses locally grown and produced ingredients. The menu changes daily so call ahead. A tough table to land.

High Rollers Only

Azul***Probably the nicest view in the City—Upscale, beautiful and pricey. I call it “global fusion” Try the oysters wrapped in beef or hamachi carpaccio. Moroccan inspired lamb also very good. “A study in Tuna” Tuna prepared three ways: raw, in tempura avocado batter and with Asian sauces.

Table 8-- Celebrity Chef Govind Armstrong. High end without being pretentious. Try the Mahi mahi blue crab chowder. Kobe beef burgers for the meat eaters.

The Blue Door—Delano Hotel ***. Once owned by Madonna. A more classical French approach with Brazilian and Latin influences. Chi chi and daring. Beaujolais poached Asian Pears or Ragout of lobster in coconut milk broth are good choices.

Prime 112*** Traditional steak house. Hefty prices to go along with hefty portions. A Mecca for celebrities and Miami's upper crust. Try the 12oz. filet, one of the best steaks in Florida.

Escopazzo*** On South Beach. “I'm going crazy” in Italian. Rustic, organic and authentic Italian menu served family style. One of the overall best places in town. 1,000 bottle wine cellar, very hard to score a table, but well worth it. Go for the milk and basil dough pasta w/ baby calamari, chickpeas, tomatoes and arugula or any of the hand rolled pastas and risottos. Prosciutto wrapped veal chops are enticing along with the Swordfish Carpaccio. Their signature dish is asparagus flan.

La Maison a' Azur—Seafood- traditional French without the French attitude. Steak frites are best in town. The John Dorie is not to be missed The huge seafood platter (oysters, caviar, crab, shrimp and escargot) is unbelievable.

The Forge—Miami Beach's upper crust dines here. Very elegant/ classic menu
Primarily devoted to steaks and lamb dishes. A massive wine list.

Tap Tap—Haitian cuisine on S. Beach—Some dishes are exceptionally hot and spicy.
Try the grilled conch w/ manioc or the shrimp in coconut sauce w/ mango sorbet for desert.

Little Havana

Versailles—A Miami “institution” w/ older Cubans and Miami Latino elite. Decent and authentic Cuban Cuisine, but not the best in town. A very rambunctious place

Casa Juancho—upscale “over the top” Spanish taverna. The movers and shakers of Miami society abound. Serves updated takes on traditional fare. Suggest the filet mignon stuffed w/ goat cheese and peppers or pan seared salmon in a creamy saffron and almond sauce.

“Off the Path”

Café Abracci—Coral Gables—Formal Italian dining, a favorite among the locals. Try the lobster filled ravioli or the gnocchi in pesto and sun dried tomato sauce.

Baleen***—Coconut Grove—Specializes in seafood. Food worth every penny.
Sample the crab cakes or oak seared diver scallops or start out with the lobster bisque. Everything is ala Carte, so the bill escalates quickly. Ask for a waters edge table.

Setai on South Beach

Celebrity hangout, very expensive and pretentious

I can barely afford cocktails—martini \$26.00

Great at sunset

Sources:

Eyewitness Travel—Miami's Top Ten 4th ed. 2009

Fodor's Florida Guide 2009

Frommer's South Florida 6th ed. 2008

Lonely Planet: Florida 5th ed. 2009