

# BAL HARBOUR

- V I L L A G E -

OFFICE OF THE VILLAGE MANAGER

LETTER TO COUNCIL

NO. 095-2016

To: Mayor Martin Packer and Members of the Village Council  
From: Jorge M. Gonzalez, Village Manager   
Date: May 13, 2016  
Subject: Tourism Related Articles

The purpose of this Letter to Council (LTC) is to share with you two tourism related newspaper articles which were recently published.

The first article appeared in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution's* travel section and highlights the Village and its assets. The second article appeared in *The Miami Herald* and provides a summary of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau's state of the travel and tourism industry in Miami-Dade County in 2015.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact me or, Assistant Village Manager, Ramiro Inguanzo.

JMG/RI

## TRAVEL

FLORIDA

### Miami's Bal Harbour is ultra-luxe

Vacation paradise offers high-end resort hotels, shopping, dining close to home.

By **Jessie Dowd**  
For the AJC

Forget flying to the West Coast to experience the luxury of Beverly Hills — just jet on down to South Florida and make your way to Bal Harbour, an uber-luxe neighborhood measuring a mere one square mile located just north of Miami Beach.

The “dream village,” founded by Robert C. Graham, actually began in 1929 when Detroit-based real estate developer Miami Beach Heights purchased the raw land. Established finally in 1946 and built with a fully conceived master plan in place, the village was envisioned as a modern community that would maintain exceptionally high standards and provide superior services.

The case is no different today, as the Bal Harbour neighborhood is known for its impeccably manicured streets of upscale oceanfront hotels, condos and resort spas, accompanied by high-end shopping and restaurants. With an average temperature of 75.3 degrees Fahrenheit, Bal Harbour makes for a sunny escape year-round that checks off the boxes on just about anyone's luxurious vacation checklist.

#### Play and shop

Bal Harbour's beach boasts white sand, tropical landscaping, and quiet surroundings (compared to the rowdiness of South Beach, which is just a quick 15 minute drive away). Running from 96th Street and Collins to the tip of the island, Bal Harbour's semi-private beach is open to the public and offers plenty of room for lounging, walking and taking in gorgeous views of the bright turquoise waters. There's also a jogging path along the beach for fitness buffs. Of course, the best way to enjoy the beach here is taking advantage of the oceanfront hotels' beach service and set up.

After soaking in some rays on the beach, escape the heat with a little retail therapy at the world-renowned Bal Harbour Shops. Fashionistas in search of designer labels from top fashion houses will find it all here, with stores from such power players as Versace, Tiffany & Co., Chanel, La Perla, Saks Fifth Avenue, Rag & Bone, Neiman Marcus, Oscar de la Renta, Gucci, Bottega Veneta and many more. Whether you're on the hunt for a chic new handbag, a stylish cover-up or some new strappy sandals, the upscale, open-air shopping center offers plenty of choices, not to mention beautiful tropical landscaping to bring your shopping experience to the next level.

If you consider shopping your cardio, work up your appetite and then check out one of the on-site restaurants, including Carpaccio, Le Zoo, Santa Fe News & Espresso, The Grill at Bal Harbour, Zodiac at Neiman Marcus or the popular Makoto—an indoor/outdoor restaurant serving up a modern take on Japanese fare. While you're shopping or noshing on tasty bites, don't be surprised if you glimpse a celebrity or two.

#### High-end hotels

Head back to your mega-luxurious hotel accommodations following an afternoon of shopping till you drop and enjoy premium customer service and supe-



The St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort is one of several high-end hotels in Miami's Bal Harbour neighborhood. CONTRIBUTED BY THE ST. REGIS BAL HARBOUR



The Bal Harbour Shops is an open-air, upscale shopping destination featuring lush landscaping and premium designer brands and labels. CONTRIBUTED BY DOUG CASTANEDO

rior digs offered up by the likes of The St. Regis and Ritz-Carlton brands, among other high-end properties.

The nine-acre oceanfront St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort represents the quintessential luxury escape, wrapped in sophistication, elegance and exclusivity that make it best in class (the hotel was awarded Forbes five-star and AAA five-diamond status in 2015). A modern interior pays homage to Art Deco style, while beautifully designed guest rooms and suites offer unobstructed views and relaxing sanctuary.

The resort offers various dining options, including the must-visit J&G Grill—a beachfront restaurant featuring a menu by acclaimed chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten (black truffle pizza with fontina cheese? Yes, please!). For a more casual meal, check out the resort's recently opened BH Burger Bar to indulge in a high-end twist on burgers and a customizable menu. Wine aficionados will want to take note that the St. Regis recently launched a monthly sommelier series that will continue through the year, partnering with a different winery each month for exquisite food and wine pairings. The next wine dinner, May 19, will feature Armand de Brignac Cham-

pagne (Ace of Spades).

The resort also features the Remède Spa for total de-stressing, as well as two tropical pools and private cabanas for rent, among other luxe amenities. For the ultimate treat, take advantage of the butler service and 24-hour concierge. Another luxurious hotel option is the Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, which offers sweeping views of the ocean and intracoastal waterway. With 124 guest rooms and suites (including a semi-private elevator and personal entrances to all accommodations), this resort's luxurious rooms provide spacious layouts and terraces to enjoy ocean breezes. A Pool Bar & Grill serves up signature cocktails and light fare (sushi available Fridays and Saturdays), while the Bistro Bal Harbour features “ocean-to-table” cuisine crafted from local ingredients and served up in a modern beach-chic setting. Get Zen in the 10,000-sq.-ft. waterfront Exhale spa or get fit with a yoga or Core Fusion class. Then take a dip in the heated outdoor pool with private cabanas or head to the beach. If a boutique hotel experience is what you're searching for, consider staying at the Bal Harbour Quarzo that overlooks the intracoastal waterway. The hotel

exudes peaceful vibes and combines the feel of residence-style accommodations with the modern design and luxuries of a chic hotel. The hotel offers a solarium, outdoor pool and Zen meditation gardens, in addition to its condo-size suites. Up the ante with private chefs available for hire, as well as in-room or garden massage upon request.

Located just a few minutes walk directly across from the Bal Harbour Shops, the Sea View Hotel is a deluxe European style, full-service beachfront property. Newly renovated guest rooms offer views of the Atlantic Ocean and Biscayne Bay. An inviting Olympic-size, heated pool and expansive pool deck welcome relaxation (we think the Key West style cabanas are perfect for an afternoon nap).

If you'd rather dial back your hotel accommodations even more so you can splurge on your shopping excursions, then consider staying just south of the actual Bal Harbour neighborhood in Surfside, or a tad north in Sunny Isles.

#### Things to do

Besides lounging, shopping and dining, you can also enjoy area activities like fishing charters and boat rentals at Haulover Park's Marine Center just north

#### IF YOU GO

**Bal Harbour Shops.** 97 00 Collins Ave., Bal Harbour, 305-866-0311, balharbourshops.com.  
**St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort.** 97 03 Collins Ave., Bal Harbour, 305-993-3300, stregisbalharbour.com.  
**The Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour.** 10295 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 305-455-5400, ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/miami-balharbour.  
**Bal Harbour Quarzo.** 290 Bal Bay Dr., Bal Harbour, 305-222-7922, quarzomiamihotel.com.  
**Sea View Hotel.** 9909 Collins Ave., Bal Harbour, 800-447-1010, seawiew-hotel.com.

of Bal Harbour. Haulover Park is also home to clothing-optional Haulover Beach and a 99-acre park with picnic areas and a dog park.

If the art scene is more your speed, you'll want to check out the public art program. Unscripted Bal Harbour, which was founded in 2013 to support the arts in South Florida and further position Bal Harbour as a cultural destination by making contemporary art accessible to residents and guests. Annual “Art Chats” take place several times a year with special guests and “Art Access Tours” offer free access and private tours of Miami's top museums, private collections and cultural destinations. For more info on Unscripted Bal Harbour 2016 events, visit balharbourflorida.com/legacy/unscriptedartprojects.

Packing plenty of glam into its tiny, ritzy footprint, Bal Harbour makes for an easy and quick — albeit expensive — getaway not far from home, yet worlds away. Black card not included.

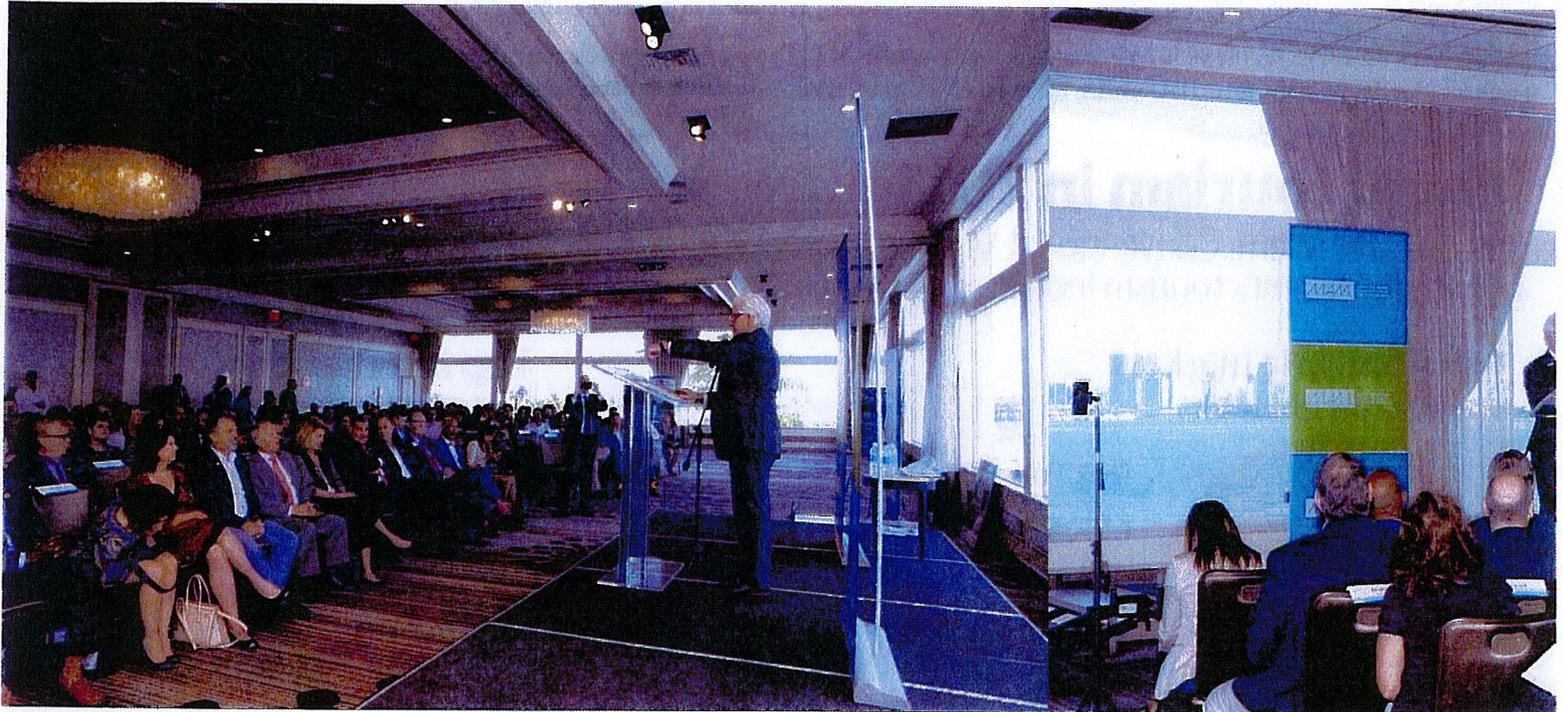
# Miami is still hot, local tourism bureau says, hits record 15.5 million visitors in 2015

## HIGHLIGHTS

About 15.5 million visitors in 2015, about half domestic

Internationally, Brazil is still the top market for visitors, followed by Canada

Changes in hotel industry in store for 2016



BY CHABELI HERRERA  
[cherrera@miamiherald.com](mailto:cherrera@miamiherald.com)

Miami continues to outdo itself as a magnet for travelers, drawing in a record number of 15.5 million visitors last year, the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau said at its annual State of the Travel and Tourism Industry breakfast Friday.

With the Miami skyline serving as a not-so-subtle backdrop at Key Biscayne's Rusty Pelican restaurant, bureau president and CEO William D. Talbert III touted another year of records for Miami in 2015, with 6.4 percent growth in visitorship over 2014's record year. Of the 1 million additional visitors this year, about 500,000 traveled to Miami for the first time.

"Look outside the window, it ain't all bad," Talbert told about 400 guests, most from the hospitality industry. "Another record year."

Quite a view at the @MiamiandBeaches State of the Tourism Industry meeting (another record yr says Bill Talbert)  
[pic.twitter.com/ZCbJzUAQFk](https://pic.twitter.com/ZCbJzUAQFk)

— Chabeli Herrera (@Chabelih) May 6, 2016

Domestic visitors made up slightly more than half of Miami's tourists, and international tourists, primarily from Europe and the Caribbean, accounted for the other half.

Of the domestic visitors, the largest market of origin was the New York City region, with 2.1 million travelers, up 10.5 percent over last year, followed by Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston and Atlanta. This year, New York visitors accounted for an economic impact of \$2.3 billion, making it the first market to break the \$2 billion mark.

**ABOUT 2.1 MILLION TRAVELERS CAME TO MIAMI FROM NEW YORK CITY, THE LEADING MARKET THIS YEAR. INTERNATIONALLY, BRAZIL WAS THE LARGEST MARKET IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF VISITORS.**

Internationally, Brazil and Colombia remain billion-dollar markets as well, despite less robust growth from international visitors overall.

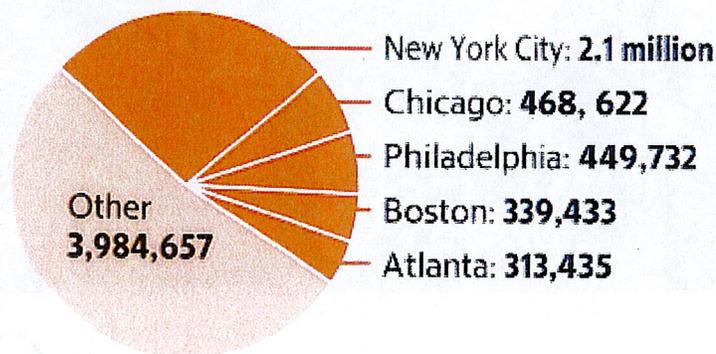
In 2015, the number of international travelers grew by only 3.4 percent, compared to domestic travelers' 9.4 percent.

But despite an economic slowdown in Latin America, Brazil remains Miami's top international market, accounting for 747,542 travelers in 2015, up 2 percent over the previous year. The increase follows a dip in 2014, when 3 percent fewer Brazilians traveled to Miami compared to 2013.

## Miami tourism in 2015

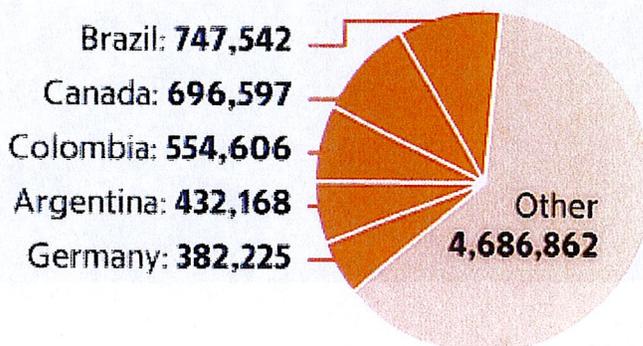
The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau 2015 statistics show another record year of growth for Miami's tourism industry.

**Top domestic markets**  
(in terms of visitors)



Total: **8 million**

**Top international markets**  
(in terms of visitors)



Total: **7.5 million**

**15.5 million**  
Total overnight visitors

Total visitor spending: **\$24.4 billion**

Hotel occupancy: **78.1 percent**

Average hotel room rate: **\$195.75**

Total tourism employment: **136,100**

Source: Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

MARCO RUIZ [mruiz@miamiherald.com](mailto:mruiz@miamiherald.com)

Canada, Colombia, Argentina and Germany take the next four spots among Miami's top international markets.

The only international group that declined were Venezuelans, with 10 percent fewer travelers visiting Miami.

"We are having some challenges on the international side," Taibert said. "Over time we've seen this, some go up, some go down, but Brazil is still definitely in transition."

Talbert said the bureau will continue to monitor Brazil in 2016, but it's too early to tell whether economic softness in South America will catch up to Miami's hospitality industry this year, at least.

---

# \$24.4 billion

Amount Miami's 15.5 million overnight visitors spent in 2015

---

Together, the 15.5 million 2015 travelers spent \$24.4 billion, up 2.3 percent from last year, according to the bureau's latest statistics. But, on average, visitors spent 3.9 percent less per person per visit than in 2014.

Hotel occupancy rose slightly to 78.1 percent in 2015, placing Miami sixth in the nation among the top 25 hotel markets.

Booking a stay at a Miami hotel cost an average of \$195.75 a night in 2015, up \$11 from 2014.

In 2016, those numbers may be less robust as several hotels go through ownership changes and renovations.

"At the end of the day you've got in the pipeline thousands of hotel rooms — that creates a challenge for us to get those additional customers," Talbert said. "But we are going to go through a period now of settling out as the new properties coming online."

Among those: Melia Hotels International's ME Miami opening on Biscayne Boulevard this summer; Swire Properties' EAST, Miami opening in Brickell May 31; and Chilean Atton Brickell Miami opening this summer.

---

66

## WE ARE GOING TO GO THROUGH A PERIOD NOW OF SETTLING OUT AS THE NEW PROPERTIES COMING ONLINE.

William D. Talbert III, president and CEO of the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

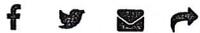
---

A record 136,100 people were employed in the leisure and hospitality industry in 2015, according to the bureau's research — but several hundred will be out of jobs in 2016. Change of hands at various hotels and renovations will displace 538 workers, who will be laid off by the end of June this year, the highest number since 2009, according to records from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Looking forward, one more element may shake up Miami's hotel industry even further this year: home-sharing network Airbnb.

At Friday's breakfast, a low grumble was felt through the room at the mention of it.

"It is a disruptor," Talbert said. "It is the largest hotelier in the world today, it's here and I know the city of Miami Beach is taking a look at that."



**MORE TOURISM & CRUISES**

---