

By Anne Ford

Destination: Miami

GET AWAY: A spate of new or renovated luxury hotels is making the Miami area one of the hottest destinations for 2008. Some, like the Eden Roc resort, won't open until later this year. But with January temperatures topping 70 degrees there, why wait?

DO: Plenty of orchids (but with luck, no thieves) will grace the 19th World Orchid Conference, which opens Wednesday — the first time in 24 years that the gathering has come to the United States. Orchid obsessives from Singapore, Brazil and other countries will show their pricey specimens in the Sheraton Miami Mart Hotel's exhibit hall, which is open to the public (www.19woc.com; 786/621-9962; daily admission \$20-\$50). Also on Wednesday, Dizzy Gillespie trumpet protégé Arturo Sandoval takes the stage at his eponymous jazz club, where Branford Marsalis and Dee Dee Bridgewater also have performed. Business casual attire is required (www.arturosandovaljazzclub.com; 305/403-7565; most performances \$15-\$40).



STAY: The Delano Hotel has long been famous for its shallow but palatial pool — make that "water salon" — with underwater music and poolside dining. To that attraction add the speakeasy-style Florida Room lounge, created by singer Lenny Kravitz's New York-based design firm, which opened to the public just last month. Look for the Lucite piano and Swarovski chandeliers (www.delano-hotel.com; 800/697-1791; \$605-\$5,500 double occupancy). The historic Biltmore Hotel & Resort's accommodations include the Everglades Suite, aka the "Capone Suite" after its most famous occupant; these days, Bill Clinton is a fan of its two-story, two-bedroom tower digs with private elevator (www.biltmorehotel.com; 800/915-1926; \$2,000-\$5,000 per night).



DINE: One of the hottest tables in town: Maison d'Azur at the new Angler's Boutique Resort, where caviar runs \$40-\$450 an ounce, the server will fillet your sole *entière* before your eyes and the profiteroles come in the form of a *pyramide*. After all that, end on a light note with champagne granita and a salad of tropical fruit (maisondazur.net/site; 305/534-9600; entrees \$22-\$76). Meanwhile, Michael's Genuine Food & Drink makes the "How hungry am I?" debate a little easier by skipping the usual appetizer/entree demarcation. Instead, the dinner offerings are classified by size, from "small" (seasonal stone-crab claw with mustard sauce and lime) to "extra large" (wood-roasted porterhouse with porcini Worcestershire). The one-size-fits-all desserts include Key lime cheesecake flan with macadamia shortbread and tropical fruit salsa (www.michaelsgenuine.com; 305/573-5550; dinner items \$13-\$46).

FOR MORE INFO: Call the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau at (800) 933-8448 or visit www.gmcvb.com.

Photos are of the pool at the Delano Hotel, the Biltmore Hotel & Resort and dining at the Maison d'Azur