

# The American Riviera Beckons



Perhaps best known for its stunning beaches, beautiful people, and hip nightlife scene, Miami Beach will be the site of NCARB's 2005 Annual Meeting and Conference. Between June 22 and June 25, meeting attendees will gather at the Ritz-Carlton, South Beach, located at the intersection of Collins Avenue and Lincoln Road, and just moments away from the water and a panoply of South Beach attractions.

## BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS

But just to set the record straight, Miami Beach is more than fun and games. It is, in fact, home to the most extensive collection of Art Deco and Art Moderne buildings in the world. Primarily built during the 1920s and 1930s, these candy-colored structures highlight "angular and clean" lines characterized by "stepped back facades, symmetrical or asymmetrical massing, and strong vertical accenting." Decorative features include "geometric patterns, abstracted natural forms, modern industrial symbols, and ancient cultural motifs" (*quoted material is from the [www.miamibeach411.com](http://www.miamibeach411.com) web site*).

Miami Beach is also home to a unique school of design, Miami Modern or "MiMo." The newly renovated Ritz-Carlton is one of the most visible examples of MiMo, having been designed by Morris Lapidus, the so-called father of MiMo. Based on International Style, MiMo adds whimsical flourishes to stoic elevations. Look for concrete pattern block screens and steel sunshades comprising slats or louvers (*brise soleil*). Collins Avenue showcases one of Miami Beach's two historic districts dedicated to MiMo.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

This year's Icebreaker will be held at the Miami Children's Museum (MCM), located on Watson Island, an archipelago situated between South Beach and the greater Miami region. The MCM debuted its new building in September 2003, a 56,500-square-foot facility that was designed by the Miami-based architecture and design firm, Arquitectonica International, Inc. With 12 interactive exhibits, children of all ages will enjoy exploring this cornucopia of delights. A catered dinner highlighting the best of South Florida's eclectic cuisine will close out the evening along with entertainment reflecting a Spanish/Cuban flair.

A special surprise awaits attendees of the Closing Night Banquet. Not only will you tuck into a wonderful meal, you also will have the opportunity to welcome the FY06 Board of Directors and to honor the recipients of the 2005 President's Medal for distinguished service. The evening's entertainment will be provided by none other than Mark Aspaas and his South Dakota-based band, the All Stars.

The Council looks forward to welcoming member board members, member board executives, collateral organization representatives, and international guests to the American Riviera in late June.

## MIAMI BEACH'S HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The most informative way to enjoy Miami Beach's plethora of architectural treasures—be they Art Deco, Art Moderne, or MiMo—is by taking part in a walking tour. The Miami

Design Preservation League and the Art Deco Welcome Center offer a number of options for discriminating visitors, including

- Art Deco District Guided Walking Tours: Conducted by local historians and architects, a guided walking tour provides an introduction to the Miami Beach Architectural Historic District. Ninety minute walking tours of "Ocean Drive and Beyond" depart from the Art Deco Welcome Center (*Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.; Thursday, 6:30 p.m.; Friday, 10:30 a.m.; Saturday, 10:30 a.m.; and Sunday, 10:30 a.m.*). Fees are \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students (who must present identification).
- Art Deco District Self-Guided Audio Tours: Walk through Miami Beach's Art Deco District while learning about its architectural history. Audio tours are available at the Art Deco Welcome Center seven days a week, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fees are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors, students, and children under 12.
- Private tours also are available for parties of 25 or more. Itineraries include "Deco to MiMo, A North Beach Tour," "World War II Revisited Tour," and "Deco Underworld Tour."

All tours meet at the Art Deco Welcome Center, located at 1001 Ocean Drive. For more details about Miami Beach walking tours, contact the Welcome Center at 305/531-3484. **DC**