

Restaurant listings for the BT Dining Guide are written by Geoffrey Anderson and Dianne Rubin of Miami Food Pug (MFP), Andrew McLees (AM), Mandy Baca (MB), and the late Pamela Robin Brandt (PRB) (restaurants@biscaynetimes.com). Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, but restaurants frequently change menus, chefs, and operating hours, so please call ahead to confirm information. Icons (\$\$\$) represent estimates for a typical meal without wine, tax, or tip. Hyphenated icons (\$-\$\$\$) indicate a significant range in prices between lunch and dinner.

\$ = \$10 and under

\$\$ = \$20

\$\$\$ = \$30

\$\$\$\$ = \$40

\$\$\$\$\$ = \$50 and over

### **The Anderson**

709 NE 79th St.

305-757-3368

“Come for the drinks. Stay for the food.” That should be the sign outside The Anderson, the neighborhood watering hole from the team behind Miami Beach’s award-winning bar Broken Shaker. To complement the outstanding drink menu (which is full of South Florida-inspired concoctions), the venue offers a just-as-outstanding list of snacks and mains that includes the likes of smoked wings, queso dip, and a fried chicken sandwich. If you only order one thing, make it that last one -- it’s heaven on a plate. \$\$ (MFP)

### **Andiamo**

5600 Biscayne Blvd.

305-762-5751

[www.andiamopizza.com](http://www.andiamopizza.com)

With brick-oven pizzerias popping up all over town the past few years, it’s difficult to remember the dark days when this part of Mark Soyka’s 55th Street Station complex was mainland Miami’s sole source of open-flame-cooked pies. But the pizzas still hold up against the newbie pack, especially since exec chef Frank Crupi has upped the ante with unique-to-Miami offerings like a white (tomato-free) New Haven clam pie. Also available: salads, panini, and a tasty meatball appetizer with ricotta. There’s a respectable wine and beer list, too. \$\$ (PRB)

### **B & M Market**

219 NE 79th St.

305-757-2889

Don't let the rustic look of this mom-and-pop Caribbean market/eatery, or its ungentrified location, scare you. Walk to the kitchen in the back of the market, order, and then either eat-in (at two tables) or take-out some of Miami's tastiest, and cheapest, West Indian food. Celeb chef Michelle Bernstein is a longtime fan of the jerk chicken, ackee and saltfish, and pigeon peas and rice cooked in coconut milk. Rotis rule here; the flatbreads come plain or, better yet, in curry chicken, goat, or remarkably full-flavored vegetarian versions. \$ (PRB)

### **BarMeli**

6927 Biscayne Blvd.

305-754-5558

Just east of Liza Meli's defunct Ouzo's Taverna, her similarly rustic-festive tapas and wine bar/market has an extensive, mostly small-plates menu including all of Ouzo's Greatest Greek Hits (refreshingly light and lemony taramosalata carp roe spread, amazingly succulent grilled fresh sardines, her mom's lemon cake, more), plus more broadly Mediterranean creations like an Italian-inspired grana padano flan, uniquely topped crostini and flatbreads, cheese/charcuterie boards. The boutique wine selection focuses on unusual (sometimes virtually unknown, and unavailable elsewhere in town) Mediterranean varietals from family-owned vineyards. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Battubelin**

749 NE 79th St.

786-391-0300

Shorecrest gem Mina's Mediterraneo is long gone, having been replaced by another soon-to-be neighborhood favorite: Battubelin. The Italian eatery checks all the boxes when it comes to a memorable dining experience: appetizing cuisine, friendly service, and lots of wine. The menu isn't reinventing the wheel -- just refining it. Plates like the gnocchi pesto pasta and the burrata and prosciutto pizza are items we've seen before, but rarely at a caliber like this. Word of advice: Save room for tiramisù. \$-\$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Blue Collar**

6730 Biscayne Blvd.

305-756-0366

Like its predecessor in this space (Michael Bloise's American Noodle Bar), this working-class-themed eatery is helmed by a former fine-dining chef, Daniel Serfer, a Chef Allen's vet who now crafts casual, creative fare at prices all can afford. Dishes are eclectic. The roughly dozen veggie dishes alone range from curried cauliflower purée to maduros to bleu cheese roasted asparagus. Shrimp and grits compete with any in Charleston; pork and beans, topped with a perfectly runny fried egg, beats Boston's best. \$-\$\$ (PRB)

### **Bon Gout BBQ**

99 NW 54th St.

305-381-5464

Bon Gout BBQ will have you smacking your lips in no time. All your favorite proteins make an appearance at this Little Haiti shop: chicken, pork, beef, and fish. The griot -- Haitian fried pork -- is a must for first-timers and a steal at \$10. Heftier plates like the fried fish dinner are still surprisingly affordable and double as lunch *and* dinner; you'll be rolling out of here. There are some big Haitian flavors hidden inside this small storefront. \$ (MFP)

### **Boteco**

916 NE 79th St.

305-757-7735

This strip of 79th Street is rapidly becoming a cool alt-culture enclave thanks to inviting hangouts like this rustic indoor/outdoor Brazilian restaurant and bar. Especially bustling on nights featuring live music, it's even more fun on Sundays, when the fenced backyard hosts an informal fair and the menu includes Brazil's national dish, feijoada, a savory stew of beans plus fresh and cured meats. But the everyday menu, ranging from unique, tapas-like pastéis to hefty Brazilian entrées, is also appealing – and budget-priced. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Cake Thai Kitchen**

7919 Biscayne Blvd.

305-534-7906

Helmed by a perfectionist young chef (formerly from Makoto) and his host/dessert-maker mom, this hip hole-in-the-wall serves typical Thai street food. Many dishes are astonishingly ambitious, like peanut/garlic chip/cilantro-sprinkled roast duck noodle with Chinese broccoli, and intense pork fat-enriched broth. Other unique specialties include spicy house-cured pork/crispy rice sausages, soy and whisky-marinated steak jerky, swoonfully sinful pork belly with basil sauce, and citrus/curry-tinged fried chicken wings. Arrive early to score the wings. Surprisingly scrumptious tofu and veggie preparations, too. \$-\$\$ (PRB)

### **Café Roval**

5808 NE 4th Ct.  
786-279-6800

For a romantic evening in the Upper Eastside, Café Roval's Old World flourishes set the perfect *mise-en-scène* for magic. Restaurateur Mark Soyka of News Café, the Van Dyke, Andiamo, and Soyka Restaurant made a bold move opening his latest restaurant in the storied pumphouse building just north of his 55th Street Station property. The subtly anachronistic décor casts an ambiance suspended in time. Coral-rock walls extend toward a beautifully vaulted ceiling in the dining room adorned with antique chandeliers. Elsewhere, quirky touches abound throughout the dining room and into the outdoor seating area. During the cooler months, dining is best experienced by candlelight on the backyard patio, comfortably nestled between lush gardens and a reflecting pool. The restaurant's menu is influenced by a savory fusion of Mediterranean, Asian, French, and American cuisine. Lots to try here, including caviar, tuna crudo, grass-fed lamb burgers, oxtail buns, and some vegetarian options such as sprouted chickpea cakes and the vegan dish *du jour*. Selections from the bar include playful cocktails eschewing liquor in favor of wine, beer, and sake. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ (AM)

### **Chef Creole**

200 NW 54th St.  
305-754-2223

Sparkling fresh Creole-style food is the star at chef/owner Wilkinson Sejour's two tiny but popular establishments. While some meatier Haitian classics like griot (fried pork chunks) and oxtail stew are also available – and a \$3.99 roast chicken special – seafood is the specialty here: *crevette en sauce* (steamed shrimp with Creole butter sauce), *lambi fri* (perfectly tenderized fried conch), *poisson gros sel* (local snapper in a spicy butter sauce), garlic or Creole crabs. The Miami branch has outdoor tiki-hut dining. \$-\$\$ (PRB)

### **Cream Parlor**

8224 Biscayne Blvd.  
786-534-4180

Don't let the name fool you: This eclectic eatery is a lot more than just ice cream. At this cozy neighborhood spot, you can enjoy breakfast items all day or nosh on house specialties like the grilled smashed potato -- the name says it all -- for lunch or brunch. Dessert is a must at Cream Parlor, and first-timers need to experience Unicorn Poop ice cream (much more appetizing than it sounds). Even if you're not hungry, stop in to admire the vintage décor and crack a smile. Check out the patio in back. \$-\$\$ (MFP)

### **Doggi's Arepa Bar**

7281 Biscayne Blvd.

786-558-9538

MiMo residents, rejoice: Doggi's Arepa Bar has brought its Venezuelan street food offerings up north. The restaurant's second location features everything that regulars have come to know and love about the place: giant portions, reasonable prices and an extensive menu. If it's your first foray into this type of cuisine, start with the shredded beef arepa -- essentially a corn flour pocket of flavor. The cachapa -- a corn pancake with cheese and cream -- is another beloved specialty that's not to be missed. \$-\$\$ (MFP)

### **Dogma Grill**

7030 Biscayne Blvd.

305-759-3433

[www.dogmagrill.com](http://www.dogmagrill.com)

Since Frankie and Priscilla Crupi took over this hot dog stand, the menu has changed significantly, with some items eliminated (any vegetarian hot dogs, salads, chichi toppings like avocado). But choices have expanded to include new dog choices (brats, Italian sausage, more) plus burgers and other classic eastern U.S. regional urban street foods: New England lobster rolls, New Orleans po'boys, Jersey shore cheese Taylors (pork roll), Baltimore crab cake sandwiches, and naturally, Philly's of all sorts -- cheese steak and beyond. \$-\$\$ (PRB)

### **East Side Pizza**

731 NE 79th St.

305-758-5351

Minestrone, sure. But a pizzeria menu with carrot ginger soup? Similarly many Italian-American pizzerias offer entrées like spaghetti and meatballs, but East Side also has pumpkin ravioli in brown butter/sage sauce, wild mushroom ravioli, and other surprisingly upscale choices, including imported Peroni beer. As for the pizza, they are classic pies, available whole or by the slice, made with fresh plum tomato sauce and Grande mozzarella (considered the top American pizza cheese). Best seating for eating is at the sheltered outdoor picnic tables. \$ (PRB)

### **Ferraro's Kitchen**

1099 NE 79th St.

786-534-2136

Seasoned restaurateur Igor Ferraro, who's honed his chef chops here and abroad in Italy, has opened a new eatery for those seeking two of life's tastiest pleasures: pasta and wine. The inviting dining room is also spacious, and you'll find ample room at the bar as well; saddle up to the latter for a better view of the kitchen, where Chef Ferraro is busy creating homemade pappardelle, lasagna, and other Italian classics. Complement your meal with a bottle from the expansive wine selection, then order the signature tiramisu for a sweet ending. \$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Fiorito**

5555 NE 2nd Ave.

305-754-2899

While owners Max and Cristian Alvarez's description of their eatery as "a little Argentinean shack" is as charming as the brothers themselves, it conveys neither the place's cool warmth nor the food's exciting elegance. Dishes are authentically Argentine, but far from standard steakhouse stuff. Chef Cristian's background at popular pop-up The Dining Room becomes instantly understandable in dishes like orange and herb-scented lechon confit (with pumpkin mash, pickled cabbage salad, and Dijon mojo) or sopa de calabaza, derived from Argentina's peasant stew locro, but here a refined, creamy soup. Many more surprises -- even steaks. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Firito Taco**

1071 NE 79th St.

305-793-6676

Nestled between Tap 79 and Royal Bavarian Schnitzel House, this low-key taco shack features two sections -- one for eating and one for playing bocce. The menu is limited to ten overstuffed tacos (two per order), quesadillas, desserts like churros and paletas, and floor-to-ceiling fridges of ice-cold beer. The most popular tacos are the carne asada with tomato, onion, cheese, garlic chili aioli, and cilantro and the Tinga Club with chicken, avocado cream, bacon, tomato, queso, garlic chili aioli, and scallions. \$\$ (MB)

### **Flavorish Market**

7283 Biscayne Blvd.

305-754-8787

As Zabar's reflects Manhattan's Upper Westside neighborhood, this smaller specialty foods shop is geared toward Miami's Upper Eastside lifestyle. The carefully curated stock ranges widely: upscale packaged foods; boutique wines/beers; artisanal cheeses and cured meats; cookbooks, kitchen utensils, more. But highlights are locally produced fare: Mimi's famed

raviolis; Roc Kat's tropical ice creams; chef/restaurateur Ken Lyon's prepared foods, including daily-changing dinners for two; Zak the Baker's crusty sourdough breads, plus sandwiches on same. Best-kept secret: While there's no official café component, comfie counter seats enable on-premises breakfasting, lunching, and coffee/pastry breaks. \$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Go To Sushi**

5140 Biscayne Blvd.

305-759-0914

[www.gotosushimiami.com](http://www.gotosushimiami.com)

This friendly, family-run Japanese fast-food eatery offers original surprises like the Caribbean roll (a festively green parsley-coated maki stuffed with crispy fried shrimp, avocado, sweet plantain, and spicy mayo), or a wonderfully healthful sesame-seasoned chicken soup with spinach, rice noodles, and sizable slices of poultry. Health ensured, you can the enjoy a guiltless pig-out on Fireballs: fried dumplings of chicken, cabbage, and egg, crusted with quills -- really a delectable crunchy noodle mix. \$ (PRB)

### **Gourmet Station**

7601 Biscayne Blvd.

305-762-7229

Home-meal replacement, geared to workaholics with no time to cook, has been popular for years. But the Gourmet Station has outlasted most of the competition. Main reason: deceptive healthiness. These are meals that are good for you, yet taste good enough to be bad for you. Favorite items include precision-grilled salmon with lemon-dill yogurt sauce, and lean turkey meatloaf with homemade BBQ sauce – sin-free comfort food. Food is available à la carte or grouped in multimeal plans customized for individual diner's nutritional needs. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Ironside Pizza**

7580 NE 4th Ct.

305-531-5055

From the team behind Brickell's upscale Toscana Divino, this casual indoor/outdoor pizzeria (hidden inside Little River's artistic Ironside complex) retains the strengths of its predecessor, Ironside Pittzza -- an award-winning Neopolitan pizzoalo; mouthwatering wood-oven crusts; vegetarian/vegan and gluten-free toppings. But the expanded menu, including impeccable cured meat options, is a vast improvement. Especially recommended: housemade porchetta; nduja Calabrese (salami spread); the Regina pizza with prosciutto crudo, buffalo mozzarella, perfectly ripe tomatoes, and arugula; involtini (stuffed pizza rolls); an unusual carciofi salad with pine nuts and mint slivers. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Jimmy's East Side Diner**

7201 Biscayne Blvd.

305-754-3692

Open for more than 30 years and still regularly packed with locals, Jimmy's respects the most important American diner tradition: breakfast at any hour the place is open -- though that's only through mid-afternoon. Menu highlights include pecan waffles, biscuits with sausage gravy, and eggs any style, from old-school western omelets to trendy frittatas. Among sides, truly crispy hash browns are neighborhood legend, with creamy grits a satisfying second. For those who like lunchier fare, hot open-faced turkey sandwiches feature the real deal, not gelatinous deli-type turkey roll. \$\$ (PRB)

### **La Placita**

6789 Biscayne Blvd.

305-400-8173

La Placita, the new Puerto Rican restaurant from local chef José Mendin, made massive headlines at its opening, all due to a controversial flag mural on its exterior. Don't let this squabble with the city distract you from the food, which continues the Pubbelly chef's hot streak. Key West conch salad, seafood stew, and tamales are among the many highlights here, but the crowd favorite is the mofongo. Get the mashed plantain dish with ropa vieja, and watch your taste buds perk up. \$-\$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Loba**

7420 Biscayne Blvd.

786-536-6692

As suggested by this comfie gastropub's interactive literary ambiance (décor features shelves of paperbacks), the concept of young financial-analyst-turned-restaurateur Jessica Sanchez is to encourage creativity, including exploring Miami's unique culture-agriculture through food created by a staff including experienced chefs, FIU culinary students, and her mom Libia, former owner of the traditional Colombian Patacón chain. Needless to say, the menu is eclectic, ranging from South American (the Patacón, a bandeja paisa-inspired sampler plate) to modernized Old South (MiMo Fried Chicken with crispy kale and local honey). Boredom? Impossible. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Lo De Lea**

7001 Biscayne Blvd.  
305-456-3218

In Casa Toscana's former space, this cute, contemporary parillada is proof that you can have an Argentinean meal and a cholesterol test in the same month. While traditional parillada dishes are tasty, they're meat/fat-heavy, basically heaps of grilled beef. Here the grill is also used for vegetables (an unusually imaginative assortment, including bok choy, endive, and fennel), two of which are paired with your protein of choice. You can indulge in a mouthwateringly succulent vacio (flank steak), and walk out without feeling like you're the cow. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Manjay**

8300 NE 2nd Ave.  
305-542-2971

When you're craving Caribben cuisine, keep Manjay top of mind. This establishment inside The Citadel food hall may have a small menu, but its flavors are anything but. The jerk chicken bites with plantain fries are a substantial starter that should be succeeded by the Kreyol Bib, a Creole-style slow braised pork sandwich. Sides like red beans and rice and mofongo (crushed sweet plantains) guarantee that you leave with a full belly. Get some Haitian-style beignets to go if you have room. \$-\$\$ (MFP)

### **Moshi Moshi**

7232 Biscayne Blvd.  
786-220-9404

This offspring of South Beach old-timer Moshi Moshi is a cross between a sushi bar and an izakaya (Japanese tapas bar). Even more striking than the hip décor is the food's unusually upscale quality. Sushi ranges from pristine individual nigiri to over-the-top maki rolls. Tapas are intriguing, like arabiki sausage, a sweet-savory pork fingerling frank; rarely found in restaurants even in Japan, they're popular Japanese home-cooking items. And rice-based plates like Japanese curry (richer/sweeter than Indian types) satisfy even the biggest appetites. \$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Ms. Cheezious**

7418 Biscayne Blvd.  
305-989-4019

This brick-and-mortar location of Miami's most awarded food truck has an expanded menu, featuring favorites like mac 'n' cheese, but what you'll mostly want is just grilled cheese. Which is a misnomer. "Just grilled cheese" sandwiches are what your mom made. Here you'll find cunning creations like Frito Pie Melts (the Southwestern classic corn

chip/cheese/jalepeño/onion/chili combo, served on sourdough instead of in a Frito bag), or the Croqueta Monsieur (ham croquettes, tavern ham, Swiss cheese, béchamel). A welcome expansion: the spacious backyard, featuring lawn chairs and sizable shade trees, is definitely a more relaxed dining area than a hot sidewalk. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Ni.Do. Caffè & Mozzarella Bar**

7295 Biscayne Blvd.

305-960-7022

Don't let this little café's easily overlooked strip-mall location, or its informal interior, fool you. The warm welcome is authentically Italian, as are cleverly crafted antipasti, simple but full-flavored pastas, and homemade pastries (from rosemary breadsticks to fruit-topped dessert tortas) that will transport your taste buds to Tuscany. And the housemade mozzarella or burrata cheeses -- truly milk elevated to royalty -- will transport you to heaven. A small market area provides Italian staples, plus superb salumi and the magnificent mozz, to go. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **'O Munaciello**

6425 Biscayne Blvd.

786-907-4001

Neapolitan pizza is the star of the show at 'O Munaciello Miami, whose roots originate in Florence, Italy. The full-service restaurant and pizzeria is bright and inviting, and its menu is home to an array of pizza selections sure to please the pickiest of palates. A standout: the San Daniele, which masterfully mixes mozzarella, fresh arugula, shaved Parmesan, and cured ham. Diners not in the mood for pizza can opt for pastas like a linguine with clams or a spaghetti cacio e pepe with prawn; a small selection of meat and seafood entrées is available as well. \$\$-\$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Organic Bites**

7010 Biscayne Blvd.

786-542-9654

Too often healthy eating is associated with deprivation, but not at this breakfast/lunch/dinner bistro. Co-owners Andres and Ana Reid's concept focuses mainly on people-pleasing dishes that are 100% chemical/GMO-free, not on calorie-counting. The ingenious international comfort food menu of ex-José Andres Bazaar chef Goncalo Costa does include vegetarian/vegan dishes but ranges far beyond: deceptively decadent-tasting eggs Florentine (with tomato and avocado hollandaise); Portuguese bacalhau cakes with black-eyed pea salad; big juicy certified-organic burgers with smoked truffle mozzarella on onion brioche buns, with sweet potato fries. To accompany: fresh juices or organic wines. Ambiance is kid-friendly; prices,

atypical of many organic eateries, are parent-friendly. \$\$ (PRB)

### **Pinch**

8601 Biscayne Blvd.

305-631-2018

Small bites, big impact, hence the name, Pinch. Chef-partners Rene Reyes and John Gallo have fun with a freestyle menu incorporating the cuisines of Asia, Italy, and Spain for an eclectic mix that is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. Seared Maine scallops with piquillo sauce, parsnip, and squid ink, and Pinch Salad with brassica greens, shaved veggies, ricotta salata, and cucumber-oregano vinaigrette are served on stoneware plates. Simple items like eight-ounce flat iron steak and organic half chicken are classic standards done right. A unique wine list takes a departure from the typical Chardonnays and Malbecs. There's also a great brunch, including brisket sliders, stuffed French toast, and eggs Benedict. \$\$\$ (MB)

### **Phuc Yea!**

7100 Biscayne Blvd.

When renowned pop-up Phuc Yea quietly folded back in 2011, restaurateurs Ani Meinhold and Cesar Zapata refused to let their innovative "Viet-Cajun" cuisine become another Miami memory. Fast forward several years and patience has undoubtedly paid off: Phuc Yea is back, sporting a swanky new permanent home and a menu that not only expands upon but improves what the restaurant did right the first time. The new multi-story restaurant is effortlessly hip, featuring neon signs and weathered rustic wood furniture throughout. The menu leans toward smaller tapas-style plates, which are sure to infuriate Miami's gourmards, but make up for diminutive portion sizes with flavor for days. The signature Cajun woks are superb, while the smaller dishes such as the fragrant yet mild-tasting eggplant curry and the stellar "Broken Rice" -- saucy caramelized pork belly served over short grain rice -- are great for sampling when friends or family join in on the fun. If you order dessert, opt for the extremely popular bread pudding, or the mung bean pudding if you're feeling adventurous. \$\$\$ (AM)

### **The Plantisserie**

7316 NE 2nd Ave.

786-502-3363

Plant-based dieters have a new reason to celebrate: Little River has its first plant-based organic deli. Inside the Plantisserie, customers have vegan options galore to choose from -- available à la carte or in bulk. Hosting a party? Stock up on meatless lasagna and shepherd's pie by the pound. Or if you plan on eating in, try a quiche Lorraine with eggplant bacon or a jackfruit

empanada. Rotating specials ensure that there's something new every time you visit. \$ (MFP)

### **Sandwich Where?**

36 NE 54th St.

786-419-2772

Don't let the cute name fool you. Sandwich Where? takes its namesake item seriously. The homey shop offers tasty sandwiches at affordable prices -- a lunch special with half a hoagie, chips, and a drink will set you back roughly \$6. That's a bargain, as are their regular sandwich offerings like prosciutto mozzarella, turkey and brie, and soppressata. Pair one with a delectable smoothie like the Tevez (pineapple, orange, and raspberry), and you have yourself a great lunch. \$ (MFP)

### **Sherwood's Bistro & Bar**

8281 NE 2nd Ave.

786-359-4030

Little Haiti isn't exactly known for its culinary options, but the new food hall at The Citadel will change that perception by year's end. Until then, Sherwood's Bistro & Bar is doing its part in filling the neighborhood's void. Expect larger-than-life plates like rabbit pot pie, gnocchi with oxtail ragu, and bouillabaisse at this comfort-food-centric restaurant. The word "homey" immediately comes to mind: Sherwood's could literally be someone's house (we're fairly certain it was), and the fascinating design just adds to the eatery's allure. With convenient parking all around, there's no reason *not* to visit. \$\$-\$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Siam Rice**

7941 Biscayne Blvd.

305-758-0516

You'll find all the familiar favorite Thai and Japanese items here, and prices for curries and noodle dishes (all customizable regarding choice of protein, preparation, and heat level) are especially good at lunch. But don't overlook somewhat pricier specialties like a deep-fried yet near-greaseless boneless half duck with veggies in red curry sauce. There's also an unusually extensive list of salads, some with inventive fusion touches, like a grilled shrimp/soba salad featuring traditional Thai flavors (sriracha chiles, fish sauce, lime) and Japanese green tea noodles. \$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Sushi Siam**

5582 NE 4th Ct.  
305-751-7818

On the menu of sushi-bar specialties plus a small selection of Thai and Japanese cooked dishes, there are a few surprises, such as a unique lobster maki that's admittedly huge in price (\$25.95), but also in size: six ounces of crisp-fried lobster chunks, plus asparagus, avocado, lettuce, tobiko (flying fish), masago (smelt) roes, and special sauces. Thai dishes come with a choice of more than a dozen sauces, ranging from traditional red or green curries to the inventive, such as an unconventional honey sauce. \$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Tap 79**

1071 NE 79th St.  
305-381-0946

One-time fine-dining chef Alfredo Patino, whose still thriving wine/tapas bar Bin No. 18 was one of the first chef-owned restaurants to bring casual culinary sophistication to the downtown/midtown Biscayne Corridor, does the same for still-transitional 79th Street with this convivial gastropub, which has a similar sharable-plates menu, but built more around beer than wine pairings. Highlights range from carefully curated, imported charcuterie/cheese plates to fun chef-driven items: house-cured beef jerky, brown sugar/ginger-marinated salmon "Scooby Snacks," hearty Coke-braised short ribs with sweet corn polenta and pungent Maytag blue cheese. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Tatore**

15180 Biscayne Blvd.  
305-749-6840

Meet the fugazzeta, a regional Argentinian specialty that is essentially a white pizza with mozzarella, onions, and oregano. And although simple, it's hard to come by in town. FYI: You can find it here. An ample outdoor space is popular on the cooler days, and inside, the great red oven takes center stage. You can go traditional with your pizza or try the Nicanora, which has caramelized onions and bacon. The restaurant opens early enough to serve the breakfast of champions -- empanadas. \$\$-\$\$\$ (MB)

### **Vagabond Sushi Bar**

7301 Biscayne Blvd.

305-699-2426 Pay a visit to the Vagabond Hotel nowadays and you'll notice things have changed -- for the better. Welcome to Vagabond Village, a multi-concept destination that includes Vagabond Sushi Bar. Here the izakaya-style plates are meant for sharing, although if

you don't want to, we understand. The fresh catches shipped directly from Japan are worth keeping to yourself. Non-fish options like Japanese fried chicken and pork belly ramen also deserve a place in your order. Really hungry? There's always the cowboy steak.

\$-\$\$\$ (MFP)

### **Via Verdi Cucina Rustica**

6900 Biscayne Blvd.

786-615-2870

After years of critical acclaim cooking the cuisine of their native Piedmont at ultra-upscale Quattro, on Lincoln Road, twin brother chefs Nicola and Fabrizio Carro decided to work for themselves, hands-on renovating the former space of MiMo District pioneer Uva 69. Cuisine here is similarly authentic, with creative twists. But there are important differences: emphasis on local, rather than mostly imported, ingredients; inspiration from all Italian regions; and best, astonishing affordability. Housemade spinach/ricotta gnudi baked in an ocean of burrata is a delight, but it's hard to go wrong here. \$\$-\$\$\$ (PRB)

### **Winewood**

7251 Biscayne Blvd.

305-754-8282

Along the Upper Eastside's Biscayne Corridor best known for its historic MiMo architecture, this darkly wooden and quirky neighborhood wine bar stands out. Although a lucky few will appreciate the tiny rustic dining area, the majority of guests will sit outdoors at the mercy of Miami's grueling summer heat. The menu leans heavily upon Argentinean staples and Italian cuisine, echoes of Devita's Restaurant and Che Soprano, which previously occupied this space. Entrées such as lomito, seafood tablas, and fresh pastas and stuffed raviolis are generously portioned and delicious. Exploring the wine menu will take patience as the list promotes a thoughtfully diverse terroir from regions all over the world. Those reeling from weekend withdrawal can opt for a glass of wine with a side of live entertainment beginning Tuesday through Saturday. \$\$-\$\$\$ (AM)