

Turn Sunday into a Funday with Brunch

Written by Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin, BT Contributors
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Food news we know you can use



undays are meant for unwinding. Since it's the last day before the workweek begins, why not go out with a bang? Stiff drinks and great food are all you need to do just that, and Miami's diverse food scene delivers delicious brunches in spades.

A perfect example: **Beaker & Gray** (2637 N. Miami Ave., 305-699-2637) in Wynwood. The extensive menu of globally inspired bites features a spectrum of flavors: sweet, savory, and everything in between. Guests can nosh on waffle paninis, cheeseburger hash, and kale eggs if salty is what they're craving; or they can upset their cardiologist by ordering sticky buns, guava skillet cookies, and sourdough french toast. No brunch is complete without libations, and unlimited mimosas can be had for a flat fee.

If budget isn't a concern, set your sights on **La Mar's** decadent brunch spread (500 Brickell Key Dr., 305-913-8358). A lavish buffet of Peruvian cuisine awaits at this Brickell gem; expect a ceviche bar, causas, anticuchos, and other tasty bites to whet your appetite for a shared main course of lomo saltado, churrasco, or another sizeable entrée. What's truly special about this brunch is the beverage side of things. Not only can you indulge traditional brunch drinks like mimosas and Bellinis, but La Mar also throws in cocktails like pisco sours to mix things up. At \$95 or \$125, depending on your main course, it's not a cheap brunch -- but it's well worth the premium.

On the other side of town, Aventura's **Tap 42** (19565 Biscayne Blvd., 786-440-7270) turns brunch into a party. The bottomless option provides customers with generous mimosas and Bloody Marys, plus certain beers like Funky Buddha's famous Floridian. To help soak up all that booze, the restaurant serves up fatty fare like the appropriately named Hangover Sandwich topped with a sunny-side-up egg and hash browns; the Southern fried chicken and waffles and spicy salmon tostones are other brunch highlights. Warning: If you're trying to eat healthy, this

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isn't the place for you.

For a more low-key brunch affair, **Captain Jim's Seafood Market & Restaurant** (12950 W Dixie Hwy., 305-892-2812) is the way to go. The weekend brunch menu -- available from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. -- is short and sweet, with a focus on seafood (no surprise there). Fish and grits, fish tail waffles, and lobster frittata all make for a unique midday meal, and the restaurant throws in a complimentary mimosa with the purchase of an entrée. Finish up with a guava coconut rum cake, and get ready to take a nap.

OPENINGS

There's more to Miami's dining scene than just good brunches, and the latest wave of restaurant openings are worth a look. One of the biggest recent openings is **Gregory's** (7301 Biscayne Blvd., 305-846-9130), an upscale MiMo diner from the team behind the popular Mandolin Aegean Bistro. The eatery, which takes over the former Vagabond Sushi inside Vagabond Motel, serves up classic comfort food with modern flourishes. Favorites like matzo ball soup, patty melts, and turkey clubs all make an appearance, as do grilled snapper, chicken paillard, and other more substantial options.

Another notable opening: **La Sandwicherie** (169 NW 23rd St., 786-409-2390) in Wynwood. The late-night Miami Beach sandwich shop beloved by drunk and sober people alike has expanded to the Arts District and brought along all your favorite sandwiches for the ride. That includes the Italian -- ham, salami, prosciutto, and provolone -- as well as the Tropical (avocado, mozzarella, papaya, mango, pineapple, and the kitchen sink). And yes, you can still swap the awesome baguette for an even more awesome croissant (pro tip).

In Aventura the newly opened **Reunion Ktchn Bar** (18167 Biscayne Blvd., 305-931-7401) is doing its part to elevate the neighborhood's cuisine with duck prosciutto croquettes, Peking-style pork belly, naan tacos, and other unconventional selections. The eclectic eatery is also trying its hand at craft cocktails, like a rosé Negroni, fig kiwi Collins, and black truffle Old Fashioned. The offerings here are things we'd expect from a hip spot in Wynwood or Miami Beach, so it's refreshing to see Aventura step up its culinary game even further. Needless to

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say, these are exciting times for hungry South Floridians.

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