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We Visited the New Miami Hotel With More Art Than Some Museums

The Moore hotel is an apt addition to Miami’s Design District.

By [Matt Meltzer](#)

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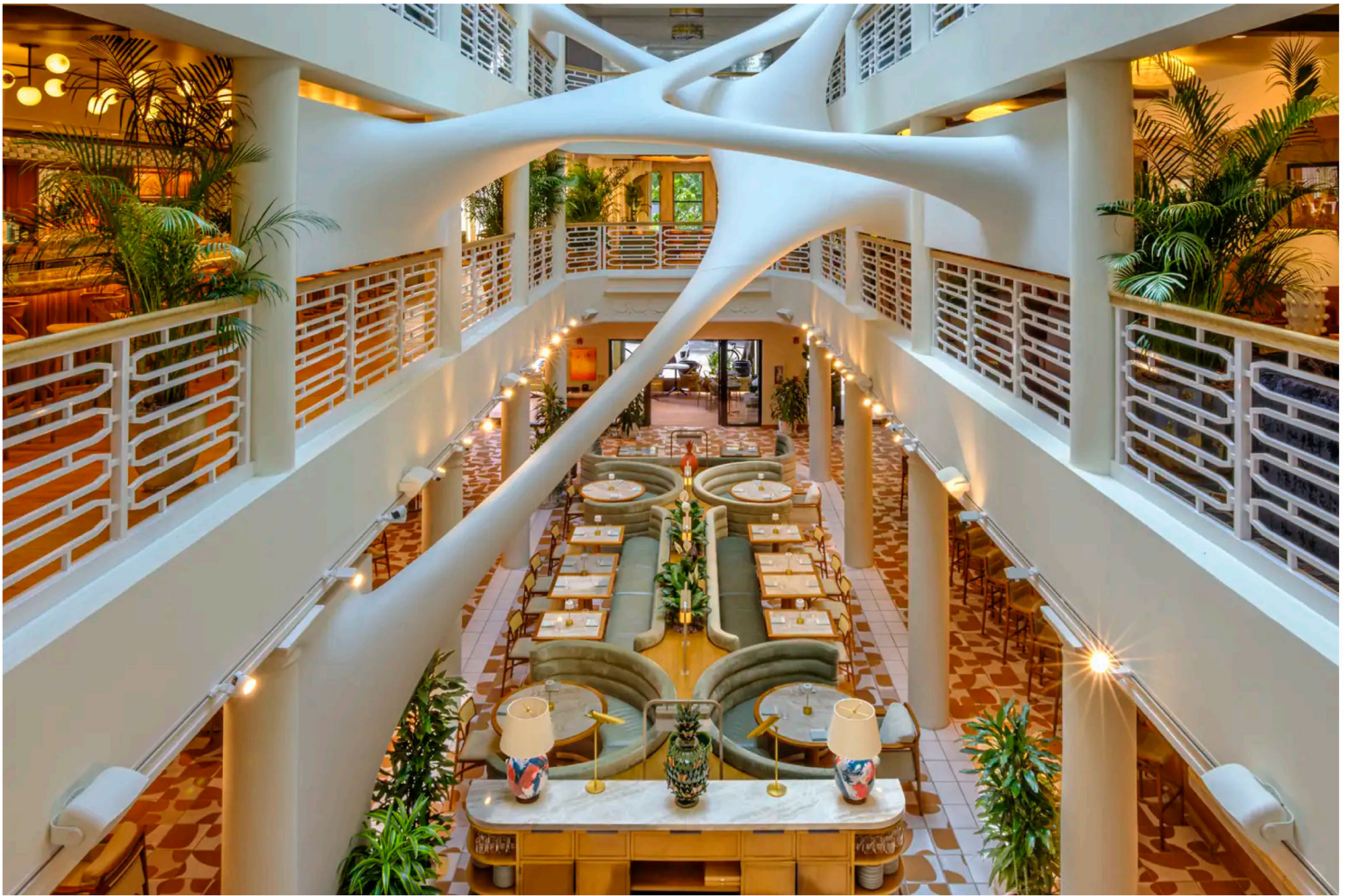


Photo by Todd Coleman, courtesy of The Moore

FIRST
LOOK

If Monet had painted The Muppets, it probably would have looked like a painting on the second floor of the Moore Building, an entertainment complex in the Miami Design District. The watercolor-style dabbling of Kermit, Fozzie, and friends perched atop bicycles

sticks out as you peruse the upper levels of the latest iteration of the Moore, now decked out in more original art than some city museums.

Art isn't just decoration inside the Moore, it's the building's soul. Ever since Zaha Hadid installed her famous Elastika sculpture across the Moore's central courtyard, the building has become a work of art as much as a lesson in history. And this month it gets its crowning achievement: a 15-room boutique hotel, also called The Moore, on the top floor that's nothing short of a masterpiece of hotel design.

This new spot in Miami's hotel portfolio is both subtle and purposeful in its design, creating an immersive experience in late mid-century nostalgia with custom furniture and intricate detail. And while the art on the walls is intriguing and entertaining, what sets the place apart is how it puts guests in a different time and place with brilliant subtlety.



Lobby at The Moore | Photo by Kris Tamburello, courtesy of The Moore

Though today the Moore Building might be easy to miss among the rows of retail shops in the Design District, when it was first constructed in 1922, things were quite the opposite. The land

that's now filled with Tom Ford and Fendi was once a sprawling pineapple plantation belonging to "Pineapple King" Theodore V. Moore. He partnered with early Miami developer David P. Davis to build this neoclassical palace, which stood tall among endless acres of agriculture.

Over the years, the Moore Building has served as everything from a furniture showroom to an event space. Last year, it began its new life as one of Miami's members-only clubs, with anchor restaurant Elastika on the ground floor. With the opening of the hotel, the Moore officially begins its latest iteration as home base for the neighborhood's cultural tourism.

"Ultimately, it seeks to be the ground zero for the Design District's movers and shakers," says Christian Schulz, design director and partner at Studio Collective, the group that designed the hotel and club. "People who come for both business and leisure, with a focus on fashion, art, and design."





Photo by Kris Tamburello, courtesy of The Moore

The hotel occupies the fourth floor, where an interior hallway looks down on the members-only lounge and courtyard. Guests can peruse the art on the walls as they find their rooms, making the experience more like a walk through a gallery than a journey down a hotel corridor.

The lodgings also seem less like hotel rooms and more like TV sets inspired by the early 1970s with retro decor benefiting from the aesthetic hindsight of the present. Ceilings made from rattan to resemble a chickee hut pattern speak both to early Florida and the rattan craze of the mid twentieth century. Walls made of white oak call to mind a softer version of rec rooms from the same era. Fully-stocked wet bars are backlit and give off an aura of Connery-era Bond seductiveness, accented by a table and custom Sossego chairs. These aren't themed rooms, they let the compilation of small details speak for themselves, allowing guests to lay back in their custom Duxiana beds and draw their own conclusions.

The rooms are all large, the smallest clocking in at about 700 square feet, while the deluxe suites top 1,000. Heavy, curved wardrobes and dressers provide the requisite touch of Miami art deco. Light fixtures are blown glass art pieces, each one different.

“When we designed the space, we wanted to honor the building’s history, but also weave a multicultural, Pan-American thread,” says Schulz. “The design is a tribute to the building’s past as a home decor showroom, with authentic and custom furnishings throughout the property and The Club.”

The suites are even grander. The Green Room feels like a 1970s rockstar's apartment, with a low-slung living room and a back door opening to the hotel’s gallery and music space, ideal for visiting artists. The La Familia is the hotel’s largest suite, with a curved panoramic view of the Design District below. The soaking tub is the perfect place from which to take it all in.



Photo by Kris Tamburello, courtesy of The Moore

Hotel guests are also granted access to The Moore's members-only club, which occupies the second and third floors of the building. And while the art in and around the hotel rooms is impressive, the club is where the design truly shines. The hotel's rotating artists-in-residence also have a showcase on the third floor.

Behind a nondescript door you'll find The Rabbit Hole, a speakeasy whose padded walls are covered in cosmic tropical art that shines under blacklight. It's an instant throwback to the dated decor you may remember from middle school roller skating nights or rides on the local fair's Gravitron, with much better sound.

The Moore has a pair of restaurants on its club levels too: a sushi restaurant set in an Old Havana-inspired indoor courtyard and a 1922 members-only dining room. There's also an orange-hued game room with deluxe versions of popular board games, adding to the hotel's sophisticated brand of nostalgia. Next door is a billiard room and TV lounge, which, while not big on art, is still great for football Sundays.



Photo by Kris Tamburello, courtesy of The Moore

Despite all its intricate and thoughtful design, the hotel doesn't have a lot of the amenities people come to Miami for. There's no pool. There's no fitness center. There's no beach access, though guests do get two beach chairs from Boucher Brothers should they venture across the causeway. Miami's newest luxury hotel is very un-Miami in that way, but like everything at the Moore, it's by design.

“This location is less about being a resort or beach destination and more about being a sophisticated experience in design,” says Schulz. “It’s a more-intimate version of the Faena, and I think international travelers coming for fashion, art, and design will feel at home here.”

Rooms aren’t cheap—rates start at about \$800 a night and range upwards of \$2,500. Though in a neighborhood where \$300 t-shirts aren’t unheard of, the price seems about right. And that price comes with access to the hotel’s coworking space, as well as all of The Club’s amenities.

So while The Moore hotel might not be a fun-and-sun resort, it is unquestionably mainland Miami’s coolest new hotel for those looking to immerse themselves in art and design. And, maybe, just a hint of Muppet-induced mid-century nostalgia.

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[Matt Meltzer](#) is a Miami-based writer who’s been covering food, events, and travel in Miami for over a dozen years. An award-winning writer, he’s also a professor of writing for digital media at University of Miami and a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Follow his adventures on Instagram [@meltrez1](#).