

Miami Beach's Newest Hot Nightspot Opens This Week

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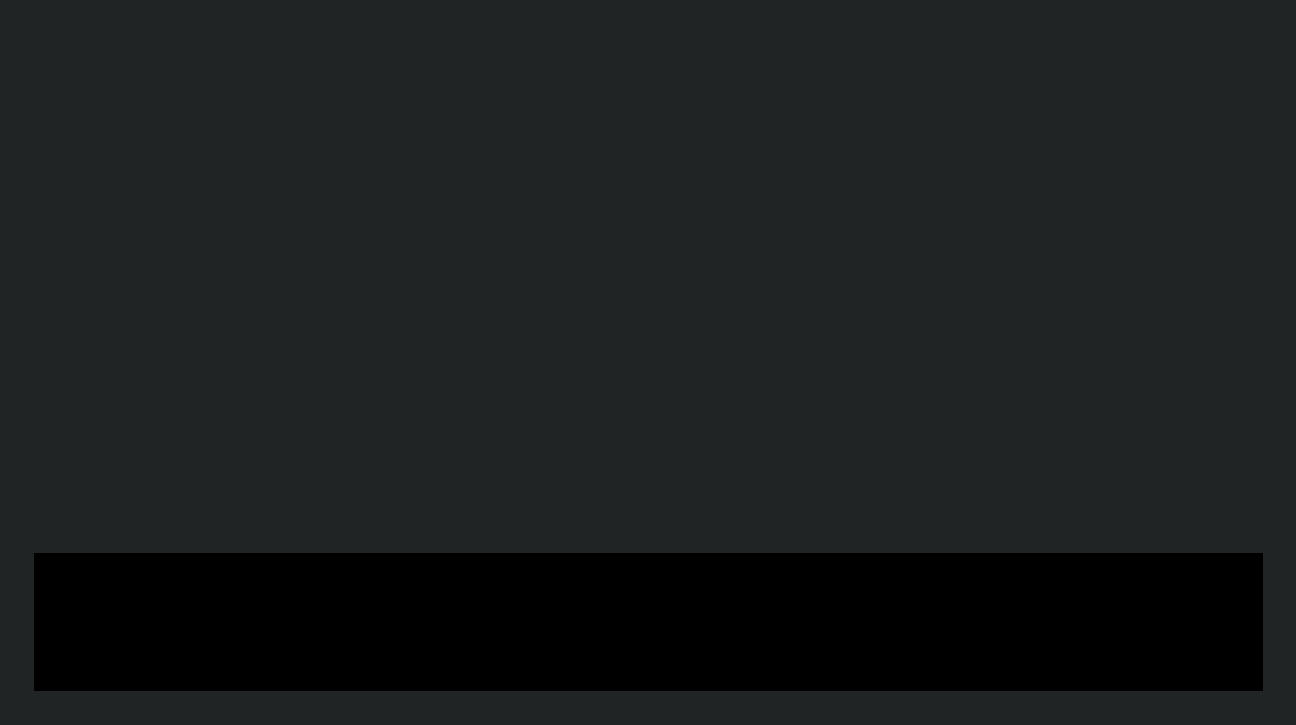


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Sharp eyed rock n' roll fans will recognize Miami's Art Deco Paris Theater from music videos starring Madonna, U2, Jennifer Lopez, Ricky Martin. On Thursday, however, this venue changes its name and focus. Now called [Queen Restaurant & Lounge](#), it's the newest addition to this nightlife-rich city, providing a plush/swanky interior and a complex, mostly Japanese menu to instead draw stars like these, and those who want to be around them, for an evening out.



The Salon Lounge. SEBASTIAN BEDNARSKI

“Being in the Miami market for over 15 years, and witnessing the city’s rapid growth, I saw an opportunity with the historic Paris Theatre to create an uber luxurious, selective, one-of-a-kind fine dining destination,” explains restaurateur Mathieu Massa who acquired the property for \$13 million in 2020. “Miami has recently experienced an influx of some of the most influential people in the country, so we decided to go after this demographic, a more sophisticated, educated, elevated, and more mature type of clientele. Our goal will be to create the most beautiful, interesting, diverse and fun mix of people possible on any given night.”



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The theater, then called The Variety Theater, opened in 1946 as a venue for classic revival films such as Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion*, its opener. Located on South Beach's Washington Avenue and later renamed The Paris, it transformed into an event space and photo studio in recent years. But it kept its Deco elements, now restored and enhanced by designer Carlos Rodriguez of Miami's [ModPlay Studio](#). At the entrance are a custom mosaic created in Italy using Venetian and Palladian techniques and a black and white mural, "Parade of the Carmens," by Miami artist Gonzalo Fuenmayor celebrating Carmen Miranda. A curved Art Deco brass slat passageway leads to The Salon Lounge designed with curved burgundy chairs and a central banquette, burgundy carpet with plum and apricot fanned leaves, gilded original crown moldings, Lobbmeyr brass, hand cut crystal, Swarovski crystal and gold finish chandeliers and a Calacatta Viola marble bar.

The main dining room SEBASTIAN BEDNARSKI

The main dining room just beyond is vast and showy with walls of lighted cutouts, a large concentric circle of hand carved teak finished in gold leaf surrounding a bronze mirror and a ceiling dome that transforms with a kaleidoscope of LED images. A members only VIP lounge that seats 80 is above on the mezzanine level with a view over the dining room. But both serve the regular menu overseen by chef Julien Jouhannaud, most recently in charge of the culinary program at Annabelle's in London and produced by executive chef Mitchell Hesse, a Miami local.

King crab with ponzu beurre blanc SEBASTIAN BEDNARSKI

Designed as a fusion of French techniques and Japanese ingredients and preparations, the menu starts with small plates such as maitake tempura with scallion ash and truffle mayo, dressed oysters East and West with an apple Szechuan mignonette and duck and pork tsukune with tare (soy sauce, sake and sugar), scallion and baby gem lettuce. Crudos including steak and tuna tartare, beef carpaccio with uni and caviar crème and deluxe seafood towers follow. Main courses include Japanese Wagyu, Prime ribeye, roasted Branzino with Thai chili ponzu and Australian lamb with chipotle miso all prepared on the Josper Charcoal Oven or the Robata Flame Grills. A selection of sushi with fish flown in from Japan will also be offered including a special selection in the eight seat Omakase Counter. And, afterward, craft cocktails, many using Japanese spirits,

in whichever lounge guests choose to congregate until late.

Chipotle miso lamb chops. SEBASTIAN BEDNARSKI

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