



TRAVELOGUE

Miami vibes

When I touched down in Miami, as part of my first trip to America, there was no telling that I was in America at all. It could have been Puerto Rico or Cuba! This side to America is so distinct with a flavour uniquely its own – you have to see it to believe it.

The ease with which people off the street will approach you here in Español or Spanish, is bound to throw you off. I was stationed in a beautiful hotel, with the largest rooms I have seen compared to anywhere in the world, especially post a trip to Ireland just the month before, right across from the Miami bay side.

The sultry smell of the sea was imminent right from the airport and so was the breeze that announces you are on a holiday or in this case, you are-in-Miami-mate! My memory of Miami is directly linked to that breeze. There was free yoga in the park next to the bay where I would head out every morning with the yoga mat under my left arm and wearing the biggest smile I could offer, exchanging greetings in Spanish, ordering my coffee and breakfast in Spanish and even carrying out small talk while waiting for the traffic lights to

change, also in Spanish.

In most of these cases, my situation was that of “no entiendo”, however, what I could not make up with words, I made up in ample good humour.

This was undoubtedly the most expensive and flamboyant part of America, and once after I had travelled along the East Coast from Florida up north and back again, there was no denying it. But there is always something about these seats that boost spirits and keep people together.

The same applies to the social scene in Miami. My husband and I found ourselves returning to the famous strip of Ocean Drive almost every afternoon, twice completely soaked in the sudden bursts of

afternoon showers. Grab one of the alfresco tables outside, like we did, and discover people from the rest of the world swarming in, in every shape and form while you enjoy a good old American burger.



It would be impossible to come up with a complete list of 'must-dos' in Miami, this is my attempt nevertheless and just might suit the likings of a Bangladeshi tourist.

WYNWOOD ART DISTRICT

This is so pretty that it should be made illegal to miss! You know you have arrived in the biggest art deco suburb in Miami when the side walls suddenly start recounting fascinating tales. This is street art at its finest.

LINCOLN ROAD MALL

If you have not snapped a few shots here after you have been to South Beach for a dip, how else would you look back and say that you were in Miami? This is the promenade boasting almost every brand in the world, lined up with cafes and restaurants with laughter and live music pouring out. It is the most festive part of Miami.

LITTLE HAVANA

What many of us (and that mostly includes me!) do not realise is how very close Cuba is to Miami. When we took our Uber ride to the area where the Cuban community thrives, we were engrossed in a conversation with the lady driver who had herself crossed the border to come work in Miami, leaving her three year-old back home, while being chased by the border patrol of five different islands before she was allowed to enter Miami.

The economy in Cuba does not allow easy survival. It took a couple of Cuban espresso shots to snap myself out of her story.

By Naaz Fahmida

Photo courtesy: Naaz Fahmida

