

# Miami's Most Historic Hotel Expands with New Cultural Programming

BY [NAIGE MASTRANDREA](#) | [HAUTE PURSUITS, HAUTE SPOTS](#) | JUNE 16, 2017



The Betsy Hotel Lobby

Photo Credit: The Betsy-South Beach

If you've been acquainted with the Magic City since its early days, you're familiar with the stately **Betsy South Beach Hotel**, formerly known as the **Betsy Ross Hotel** prior to its 2009 renovation, located in the historic **Art Deco** district on Ocean Drive. Most recently, the hotel underwent an even greater expansion in 2016, led by architect **Allan T. Shulman** and designers **Diamante Perdersoli** and **Carmelina Santoro**, merging with the (former) Carlton Hotel to become a single unified 130-key property. Achieving the prestigious ranking of being listed on the Conde Nast's Gold List this year solidifies the hotel's status as one of the best in the world.

And with the completion of the expansion, The Betsy is now greater than ever before—from its new Collins Avenue building, dubbed as the “Art Deco” wing in addition to its original Ocean Drive building, known as the “Colonial Wing,” along with 25 luxe suites; three food and beverage outlets by famed Chef Laurent Tourondel; a 3,200 sq. ft. rooftop swimming pool and deck with breathtaking panoramic views of the city; and its unique feature—a traditional library dedicated to the hotel’s culturally-enriching PACE Program. “I was very adamant about creating the space for the library and not just using it to make another suite,” hotel owner **Jonathan Plutzik** explains. “There’s something about physical books and walking into a library and frankly sitting in a space surrounded by books that is very powerful. We want people to be spontaneous and pull a book off the shelf and read it.”



Library

Photo Credit: The Besty-South Beach

The **PACE Program** rests at the heart and soul of what The Betsy is all about—standing for “Philanthropy, Arts, Culture and Education,” the program seeks to foster culture and the arts within the city through a range of events and social networking opportunities (taking place about 50 times per month), like live music, art exhibitions, poetry readings, book signings, individually-curated libraries in each of the hotel’s 130 accommodations, poems placed on pillows at turn-down each night and charitable collaborations with more than 250 service driven organizations since 2009. “We always wanted to be something more significant than just great service and great beds because we are blessed with a beautiful facility and place in the

community, and we are in Miami, which is a place with so much going on culturally—more so than we often admit to ourselves . . . we don't talk enough about Miami being one of the world's greatest cultural centers," explains Jonathan Plutzik on the hotel's implementation of the PACE Program.



The Betsy Ocean Deck

Photo Credit: The Betsy-South Beach

A unique aspect of the hotel that is pivotal to the PACE Program is the "Writer's Room," a public room where the hotel invites writers and creatives from all over to seek refuge in the cozy space to let their creativity flow, its motto encouraging artists to "do their best work" in an atmosphere where they are treated with great respect. Since its inception, the room has welcomed more than 500 creatives. This special feature of the property can be credited to the owner's father, **Hyam Plutzik**, a poet and three-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, whose original desk is a vintage juxtaposition to the modern room, and whose words "Expect no more. This is happiness" are inextricably attached to the hotel's brand.



Guest Room

Photo Credit: The Betsy-South Beach

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