

Hollywood isn't just a city near Miami. It's a destination in itself. Read about its spotless beaches, entertainment, dining and more.

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Despite its glamorous name, Hollywood sometimes is overshadowed by its glitzier neighbors, Miami and Fort Lauderdale. It's a laid-back beach town where pleasures from an earlier era linger alongside modern art and renovated parks. Add in a walkable, historic downtown and after-dark action at a nearby casino, and you've got a recipe for old-school glamour that is most definitely shaken and not stirred.

Day One: Scoping the Broadwalk

On Friday afternoon I head to the Hollywood Beach Broadwalk, and I'm not the only one who's had that idea. Families cruise by on surrey bikes, joggers weave around pedestrians and 'tweens zip down the 2.5-mile stretch on "funcycles," the bicycle version of a low rider.

The promenade was built in the 1920s by city founder Joseph Young, and its recent renovation has only added to its enduring appeal. On one side of the path, the Atlantic Ocean beckons, and the beach chairs and umbrellas dotting the sand prove that plenty of people have answered its call. On the other side, souvenir shops trade in T-shirts and other beach gear, while restaurants and bars serve up everything from steak to sushi. Grab a slice at Rocco's Pizza or Angelo's Corner, get burgers at longtime fave Nick's Bar & Grill or dine on upscale tropical fare at Sugar Reef.

The salmon-colored Hollywood Beach Theatre and its year-round concert series is a draw for both locals and visitors. At the recently renovated Charnow Park, I watch kids scramble on the playground equipment and jump in and out of the interactive fountain, squealing with delight. Behind the kids' zone sit the 1930s-era Garfield Street Paddleball Courts, still the site of heated athletic contests.

Day Two: Nature in the Morning, Culture & Casino in the Afternoon The next morning I visit the Anne Kolb Nature Center at West Lake Park. This 1,500-acre spot once was slated for development, until Broward County and the state of Florida stepped in to preserve a piece of Hollywood's wild side. Several trails wind through the mangrove community, and a 66-foot-tall observation tower offers sweeping views of the lake and surrounding area. Inside the exhibit hall, a short video and a number of displays provide background information on the site's flora and fauna. Visitors also can rent canoes and kayaks and explore the park by water.

I stroll through ArtsPark at Young Circle, a 10-acre site featuring an innovative children's play area, a visual arts pavilion and stage and a water sculpture with sound art by Ritsuko Taho.

Lunchtime brings me to **Downtown Hollywood**, which dates from the 1920s and has been experiencing a rebirth. Though it still has its shuffleboard courts and vintage charm, the downtown area also possesses a modern attitude, which can be seen at restaurants such as **Lola's on Harrison** and **Argentango Grill**. I opt for a brick-oven pizza at **Luce**, a stylish Italian cafe with indoor and outdoor seating, and I'm not disappointed.

Restaurants, bars and shops line several blocks of Hollywood Boulevard and Tyler and Harrison streets, and I'm seriously tempted by the sleek Asian furniture at **Sivana** and the colorful glass works at **Mosaica**.

"It's quite a welcoming downtown," says James Crosfield, co-owner of Mosaica. "And it is a true downtown area, which there aren't that many of in Florida."

But instead of giving my credit cards a workout, I stroll through **ArtsPark at Young Circle**, a 10-acre site featuring an innovative children's play area, a visual arts pavilion and stage and a water sculpture with sound art by Ritsuko Taho. The city's artsy side also can be seen at the **Art and Culture Center of Hollywood**, which

hosts exhibits featuring everything from video installations to works created with Legos.

Late afternoon brings me to the **Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino**, where I part with a few bucks and find another example of the past meeting the present. The resort sits within the nearly 500-acre Seminole Hollywood Reservation, one of six Seminole reservations in Florida. In the Seminole Paradise shopping-dining-entertainment complex next to the hotel, I visit the **Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum** at Okalee, which displays dolls, baskets and other works by Seminole Indians. The adjacent Seminole Okalee Indian Village educates visitors about the tribe's way of life and showcases more than 30 species of Florida wildlife, including alligators and bears.

Day Three: Beach Time

I get back to nature on Sunday morning with a quick jaunt to **John U. Lloyd Beach State Park**. Its 2.5-mile-long beach offers a peaceful spot for sunbathing and swimming, and the tidal waterway through the park's center sometimes yields manatee sightings. On the Intracoastal side of the park, I watch a hulking container ship make its way through Port Everglades.

Then it's back to my hotel to pack up. Lodging options here range from the luxe **Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa** to numerous local members of the Superior Small Lodging program. They include the Old Florida-style **Hollywood by the Sea B&B**, the Gallic-inspired **Villa Sinclair Beach Suites & Spa** and the **Ocean Inn**, a tidy little hotel with an inviting courtyard.