

DOWNTOWN & BRICKELL



D'S CILANTRO MARTINI
By Andú

3 oz. Bombay Sapphire Gin or
Belvedere Vodka

2 1/2 oz. aloe vera juice


1/2 oz. lime juice

Handful of fresh cilantro, chopped

Muddle the cilantro with lime
juice. Combine with aloe vera
juice, ice and liquor in a shaker.
Shake thoroughly and strain into
a martini glass.

Welcome to Brickell, a condo canyon of undulating surfaces, towering spires, and futuristic glam that makes South Beach look like a quaint village. It's the TriBeCa of New York, with Wall Street's banks and corporate-looking Whole Foods. Eastern Brickell is synonymous with steaks cooked rare (stuff yourself at Porcao or Novecento), power suits, stilettos, and Latin American oligarchy. Well-to-do UM kids that have had enough of the Gables live at One Miami—one of the most lavish luxury hi-rises in the Magic City. It's home to the law firm that spawned Jack Abramoff and the socialites of Joan Didion's Miami. Constructed in the '80s and financed largely by laundered cocaine profits, the Me decade's aesthetics never left this place. Just hit up **Level 25** and overlook the neon lights, though the intricate **Andú's** famed ocean-like design is an exception. Brickell's western edge is a murky channel choked with tugboats, and some of the humblest and best-loved joints in the city like **Garcia's**. Wander around Downtown Miami weekday mornings and discover why you're in the capital of Latin America: the sheer variety of fruit juices and empanadas, the no English policy, and the mini-skirt as an acceptable component of the female business suit. Blink and it could be Caracas or Santiago. At night, the aluminum shutters roll down and the streets empty. Come midnight, porno flicks on DVD screens through tinted stretch Hummer windows; silicone spills out of spandex; cell phones gleam. The action shifts to the newly-christened 24-hour "Entertainment District," home to Miami's biggest danceterias, though we prefer live music at **Studio A** and more low-key haunts like **PS14** or **Tobacco Road**. Other spots on the main strip like **Space** and **Nocturnal** will lead you through a maze of velvet ropes, little clothing, and pounding house music. It's a diverse place down here. Pick your poison, but play it safe lest you and yours get jacked.

RESTAURANTS

ANDÚ RESTAURANT & LOUNGE  **NEW** MEDITERRANEAN \$\$\$ Elegant oceanic setting—blue lighting, designer hand-blown glass bubbles suspended from high ceilings, silver curtain-adorned floor-to-ceiling windows, and modern décor—but vibe is laid-back. Specialty libations like cilantro martini are popular around the wrap-around bar. Shellfish escabeche, spicy lamb gyros, gnocchi tossed with Pecorino Romano and Serano ham, and slow-baked mac n' cheese with a Manchego crust. Bring friends, dine family-style. 141 SW 7th St. (SW 1st Ct. and SW 2nd Ave.) 786-871-7005

36 BBOOK.COM

TOPLISTS 2009

2. **Andú** Oceanic setting: blue lighting, hand-blown glass bubbles suspended from ceilings, silver floor-to-ceiling curtains. Resto design feat of the year. (p. 36)