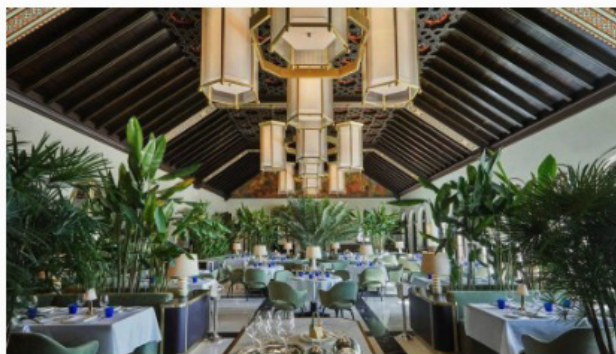


Four Seasons Surf Club Brings Glamour Back To Miami And Debuts Le Sirenuse Restaurant From Positano



Jim Dobson Contributor 
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Le Sirenuse Restaurant at Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

My heart skipped a beat as I pulled into the large winding driveway. The enormous sand colored stone building with its huge archways and high ceilings seemed strangely out of place on the sunny oceanfront of South Florida. This was certainly more of a Mediterranean retreat than anything I have ever seen in South Beach.

The brand new [Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club](#), just a short distance from the urban beat of South Beach in Surfside, Florida, is a remarkable architectural feat in this region of typical contemporary white marble buildings.



Exterior Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

Originally founded in 1930, The Surf Club was the ultimate place to be seen. In its heyday, it was the retreat of the rich and famous. Located between Miami Beach and Bal Harbour, The Surf Club opened during the Great Depression by tire tycoon Harvey Firestone. Through the years as the club continued to gain notoriety, it hosted the likes of Gary Cooper, Noel Coward, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., The Rat Pack, Elizabeth Taylor as well as Winston Churchill and Douglas MacArthur. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor and Tennessee Williams were regular guests.



Archival photo of guests using kayaks in The Surf Club pool SURF CLUB

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There was liquor on the beach during prohibition, kayaks in the swimming pool, black tie boxing dinners and lavish themed galas, one time with elephants, another with 300 tables made entirely of ice. This was the Gatsby lifestyle to be sure. And now finally after all these years, glamour is finally returning to Miami thanks to architect Richard Meier, Miami based Kobi Karp and French designer Joseph Dirand. This is one of the most luxurious destinations in all of Florida, and also one of the most special.



Gallery: The Glamorous Past of The Surf Club in Miami

8 Images

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Nadim Ashi, the founder of Fort Partners who owns The Surf Club, explains his mission to preserve, respect and enhance the original spirit: “When we bought the club I asked the oldest member, today in his 90’s, to sit with me so we could talk. I wanted to record his memories. He remembered the 1930s when it opened and showed me the spot in the ballroom where he had his first dance when he was 16. How do we create these memories? Our business model is not about real estate, it’s about experience and memories.”



My room at the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

I was fortunate to be among the first to stay at the hotel and was thrilled to meet up with my good friend, and probably one of the finest hoteliers in the world Antonio Sersale. Sersale is acclaimed for his stunning Le Sirenuse Resort in Positano and now he makes his stateside debut with the launch of Le Sirenuse Restaurant & Champagne Bar in the Four Seasons at The Surf Club. This is the kind of place where gentlemen wear jackets and women dress up for the occasion of experiencing one of the finest dining establishments in the world.



Le Sirenuse Champagne Bar at Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

Gazing at the enormous high ceiling rooms filled with gigantic potted palms, art deco lighting, and ceiling fans awakens your spirit for romance in the most perfect lighting possible. This location brought back many memories of my voyages to the Amalfi Coast and I never wanted to leave. In an area once occupied by the former club’s ballroom called “Peacock Alley”, it was converted into a Mediterranean revival showcase with an enormous outdoor terrace overlooking the ocean.



Le Sirenuse Champagne Bar Manager Jon Curiel (L) owner Antonio Sersale (C) and Food and Beverage Director Stefan De Heer JIM DOBSON

I sat down with Sersale in the new Champagne Bar and we talked about his new launch and why he chose Miami. “I have always been a fan of Miami loving the intermixing of wonderful Latin culture and the North American one in a tropical setting,” he says, “All of this in a city full of art and fascinating people. I have been going to Miami for a long time mostly to promote my Hotel to the local travel agencies as well as regularly attending Art Basel. When I first heard that Nadim Ashi the visionary developer of The Surf Club was looking for a restaurant partner, I did not hesitate and immediately after seeing The Surf Club project decided it was the right choice for me. I have never looked back.”

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“The menu at Le Sirenuse is also a close collaboration with my Positano Chef Gennaro Russo (La Sponda) as well as the Miami chef Antonio Mermolia,” says Sersale, “Their focus was to adapt the traditional Neapolitan cuisine we serve at Le Sirenuse in Positano to the ingredients available in Miami.”

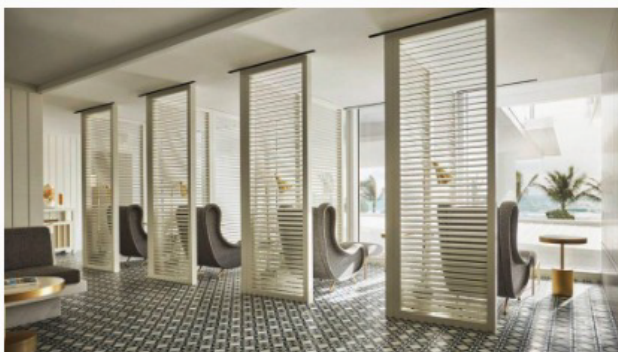
When I asked him why he chose Miami he said “I feel the refined yet informal atmosphere of Le Sirenuse works very well in Miami. The combination of excellent service, a southern Italian cuisine cooked to perfection combined with the finest, linen tablecloths, silverware, hand blown glasses (from Venetian Carlo Moretti), all while sitting in an original 1920's building surrounded by tropical plants create a unique atmosphere.”



Chef de Cuisine Antonio Mermolla and his team in the kitchen of Le Sirenuse JIM DOBSON

And knowing Antonio he will not just sit back and watch the new locations growing success. He visits quite often and continues his well-regarded social presence with the guests and invited VIPs. Something he has become well known for at his Positano location. You often find yourself having the most amazing conversations with Antonio and he is a genius at hosting the most interesting groups for drinks and dinner. For the future, he plans on expanding the music program in the large U-shaped Champagne Bar and bring in live performers. He also wants to create tastings and a spectacular Italian Sunday Brunch with a section of raw fish and other delicacies.

After a decadent meal of Chilean Seabass, Black Truffle stuffed Faggetello and finally Lamb Chops with Semolina Gnocco, I was eager to return to my stunning oceanfront room, beach chic at its best with futuristic controls accessing not only the electric shades and drapes but also an iPad controlling other features. A large flat screen television anchors the crisp and cool room with a wrap around outdoor deck overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.



Relaxation lounge at the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club Spa FOUR SEASONS

While the rooms are simple, refined and elegant, it is the spa that is truly the superstar at the hotel. I can honestly say it is the best spa in all of South Florida. A tranquil and luxurious retreat that will have you committing to an entire afternoon of indulgent treatments. My therapist created an amazing treatment in the large hammam as the body scrub transformed into a wondrous foam-covered experience, all part of the most unique offerings I have ever seen. The massage was transformative and the spa uses some of the most talented therapists available. After your treatment, there is a stunning beach house style relaxation lounge overlooking the ocean as you wear your unique sarong and robe while sipping custom teas and snacks, one of my favorite special additions to the spa.



Exclusive Image of upcoming Penthouse terrace and pool at the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

The 9-acre property includes; 77 guest rooms, 30 hotel residences and 121 private residential apartments, a private club, two restaurants, four swimming pools, cabanas, a gym, oceanfront gardens and a park – all designed by Richard Meier. Condo units range in price from \$3.4 million to \$18 million, and in size from 1,400 square feet to more than 7,000 square feet. The penthouse is not available to the public yet and the images are exclusive previews to Forbes.



Exclusive Image of upcoming Penthouse bathroom at the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS



Exclusive Image of upcoming penthouse living room at the Four Seasons Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS



Exclusive Image of upcoming Penthouse kitchen at the Four Seasons Surf Hotel at The Surf Club FOUR SEASONS

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