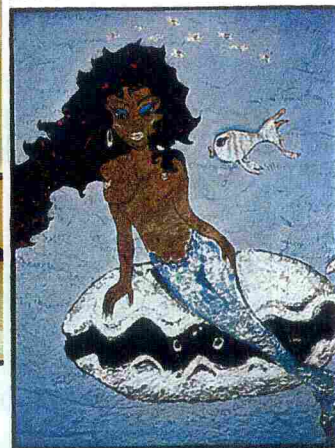


# Insider: Miami



Deco glamour at the Beacon Hotel, FAR LEFT and LEFT.

BELOW: Detail of a kitschy mural in Room 7 at the Mermaid Guest House.

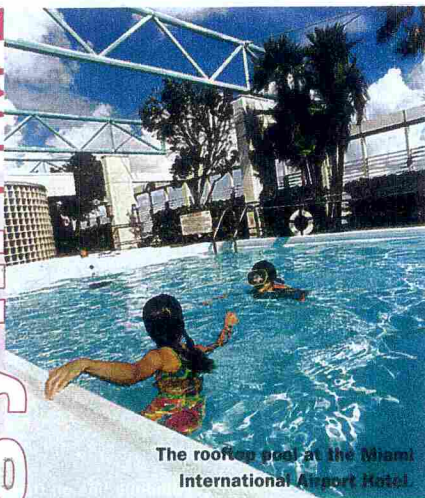


## WHERE to stay

All the South Beach hubbub evaporates once you step inside the newly refurbished **Hotel Nash** (1120 Collins Ave.; 305/674-7800; doubles from \$210). The softly lit lobby is a refuge of cushy club chairs. The 55 rooms, each with shield-shaped armoires, Belgian linens, and "rain-forest" showerheads, are whisper-quiet. The tranquil mood extends out back, where a trio of spa pools are surrounded by night-blooming jasmine. ■ **Hotel St. Augustine** (347 Washington Ave.; 800/310-7717 or 305/532-0570; doubles from \$185) is a new entry in SoBe's blossoming "South of Fifth" area. The 24 loft-style rooms have maple beds, ivory banquettes, marble steam baths, and "Spa Bars" stocked with essential oils, candles, and Nikaya Zencense incense. ■ You don't have to hock your Prada to stay in South Beach. Case in point: The **Mermaid Guest House** (909 Collins Ave.; 305/538-5324; doubles from \$105), the nine-room, color-mad cove of Uruguayan artists Ana and Gonzalo Torres. At nap time, stake out the corner futon in the secret garden, and listen to the fountain trickling beneath the blue-haired mermaid. ■ The **Beacon Hotel** (720 Ocean Dr.; 800/649-7075 or 305/674-8200; doubles from \$150) epitomizes Ocean Drive glam—Heywood Wakefield furniture on the mezzanine, blue poodle chairs in the 79 rooms, Harrison Ford and other stars checking in. The lobby gleams with black-swirled terrazzo, papaya-colored walls, and pink neon tracing the curved entrance. ■ With its wicker-filled porch, round-the-clock pantry, and whitewashed furniture, the new **Beach House Bal Harbour** (9449 Collins Ave., Surfside; 305/865-

3551; doubles from \$250) by Rubell Hotels (creator and proprietor of the ultra-mod Albion on South Beach) feels more like Nantucket or coastal Maine than Miami Beach. The 180 rooms and suites even offer a selection of non-taxing beach reading and ready-made seashell collections.

## GYM TIME



The rooftop pool at the Miami International Airport Hotel

Ever wonder where airline pilots hole up during Miami layovers? At the fitness center hidden atop the **Miami International Airport Hotel** (in Concourse E, on the roof; 305/871-4100). For an amazing \$8 you can work out and use the steam room, whirlpool, and shower. Or cool down in the long pool (left) while enjoying the breeze and the views of jumbo jets roaring away. Other gyms where you can keep up your daily regimen while in town: **South Beach Gym** (Clevelander Hotel, 1020 Ocean Dr.; 305/672-7499, \$15 per day) or **David Barton Gym** (Delano hotel, 1685 Collins Ave.; 305/674-5757; \$20 per day).