

 Cayman Airways

SKIES

JANUARY | FEBRUARY 2016

HOT TICKET
**FOODIE
EVENTS**

Local Chefs

Gain International Acclaim

Culinary Tours:

Taste Your Way Around
Grand Cayman





Courtesy of Round Hill

ACULINARY



CAYMAN AIRWAYS GATEWAY FEATURE

CAYMAN GATEWAYS NEAR AND FAR OFFER ECLECTIC FARE

By Donna M. Owens



From top to bottom: Courtesy of Juni; Carlos Martin

ADVENTURE



Besides being home to pretty beaches, chic shopping and a sizzling hot nightlife, Miami has a constantly evolving culinary scene.



Whether it's a rose petal ice cream cone in sunny Miami or spicy jerk chicken enjoyed amidst Jamaica's lush landscape, there's plenty on the world's foodie landscape to satisfy whatever your taste buds desire.

Come along as we savour eats from several Cayman Airways gateways. You will meet celebrated chefs who boast gastronomic flair, sample exotic flavours and exhilarating spirits, and enjoy unforgettable experiences.

JAMAICA

Jamaica is a food lover's paradise, one that's recently attracted top chefs like Mario Batali, who participated in the island's NyamJam Festival.

Renowned for jerk cooking, visitors can try a hands-on cooking class via the Jamaican Jerk Outback Adventure, offered at the historic great house at Prospect Plantation in Ocho Rios. The course takes place on a verandah with a panoramic view of the Caribbean Sea.

For a farm-to-table Rastafarian meal, visit Stush in the Bush — also in Ocho Rios — on a 15-acre organic Zionites farm. Enjoy lunch or dinner featuring the Rastafarian (Ital) diet of fresh fruits, veggies and spices.

Meanwhile, the Falmouth Food Tour offers a delicious blend of Jamaican food and history on a guided walk through the historic town of Falmouth. Visitors will sample various foods and learn how Jamaicans have used a fusion of cooking methods and practices that have sustained the nation through slavery, colonialism, wartime and independence.

Last but not least, savour an elevated dining experience in a scenic seaside setting at Round Hill Hotel and Villas in Montego Bay. Their James Beard Award-winning Executive Chef, Martin Maginley, utilises the finest local ingredients in a variety of custom-crafted dishes.

MIAMI

Besides being home to pretty beaches, chic shopping and a sizzling hot nightlife, Miami has a constantly evolving culinary scene.

You can stroll through iconic neighbourhoods such as Little Havana, where drinking a *café con leche* is a daily staple. Or cool down with artisanal ice cream and sorbets at Azucar Ice Cream Company. The exotic flavours range from coconut flan to sweet cream corn.

In sexy South Beach, The Ritz-Carlton, South Beach on Lincoln Road offers perfect beachfront access. For a gourmet twist on a Cuban favourite, try the hotel's version of the iconic pressed ham and roasted pork sandwich. This is not your *abuela's* (grandmother) Cuban sandwich. Think thinly sliced prosciutto, Gruyère truffle cheese, bourbon-marinated pork loin, topped with crisp house-made pickles and sandwiched between warm, flaky bread. The ultimate Cubano is served with mojo fries seasoned with garlic, olive oil and a citrus juice.

"Greater Miami's culinary scene continues to evolve and attract attention for its award-winning restaurants, chefs and diverse offerings inspired by its people and tropical



environment,” says William D. Talbert, III, President/CEO of Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau.

He has touted several food-inspired events throughout the year, such as the South Beach Wine & Food Festival and the annual Miami Spice restaurant programme. “We’re attracting food aficionados from around the world to the destination to enjoy the extraordinary culinary offerings found only in Greater Miami and the beaches.”

TAMPA BAY

Tampa Bay is quickly becoming a go-to place for craft beer fans. Recently rated one of America’s Top Ten Emerging Beer Towns, one can find a bevy of original brews here and plenty of places to have a cold one.

Cigar City Brewing, rated a Top Brewery in the Nation by The Daily Meal and ranked the number one brewer in Florida by RateBeer, prides itself on celebrating the rich history of the community’s craft beer traditions. Try the Cubano-Style Espresso Brown Ale, made with Cuban-style roasted espresso beans, sweet caramel and toffee. The Cigar City tasting room is a must-visit attraction in Tampa — try the world-famous Jai Alai, Café Con Leche Sweet Stout, Good Gourd Imperial Pumpkin Ale or even the Invasion Pale Ale. Indeed, some Cigar City beers can’t be tasted or tried anywhere else.

Afterward, head down to Ybor City to visit the first licensed brew-pub in Florida, Tampa Bay Brewing Company, a unique craft brewery with a line of core and seasonal proprietary beers and hand-crafted tap beers.



Be sure to try the Old Elephant Foot India Pale Ale or the award-winning Cider Wings, made with Red Eye Ale.

You can’t stop in Ybor City and not eat at Columbia Restaurant, Florida’s oldest restaurant. This Spanish/Cuban mainstay is known for its delicious paella and *ropa vieja* (shredded beef). And for a unique dining vacation experience, check in at the Epicurean Hotel, an upscale boutique hotel destination for foodies. The hotel’s Epicurean Theatre hosts a variety of culinary and wine classes, while Élavage Restaurant and Edge Social Drinkery truly elevate the dining experience to an art form.

CHICAGO

Chi-town is one of those cities that has it all, from skyscrapers to retro-inspired bars and restaurants. One throwback is The Green Door Tavern, built shortly after the Great Chicago Fire. Its name is derived from a 1920s code indicating that there was a speakeasy in the establishment.

Located in the basement, The Drifter is a new cocktail bar with a distinctive green door and 20th-century

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memorabilia, including a phone booth and circus décor. Each drink selection is printed on a menu of tarot cards.

Another historic neighbourhood gathering place is the California Clipper in Humboldt Park. The atmosphere is a mix of Art Deco accents and jukebox jams. With a 70-page drink menu and live music, this place is for the person who likes having options.

Diners can travel down memory lane at the West Loop supper-club, Formento's. The menu of Italian-American cuisine features everything from homemade bucatini and giardiniera, to grandma's recipe for meatballs. And don't skip Dove's Luncheonette, where they play the soulful sounds of the 1960s and 1970s while serving Southern-inspired Mexican eats.

If your taste buds are craving an exciting experience, visit Girl & the Goat in the Randolph Restaurant Corridor. Executive Chef Stephanie Izard, winner of "Top Chef" season four, serves up bold flavours and non-conventional plates, like escargot dumplings, wood-oven roasted pig face and braised beef tongue.



NEW YORK CITY

Oh, how we relish chow time in the Big Apple: late night pizza, overstuffed deli sandwiches and savoury street grub, be it falafels or tacos. Yet the city that never sleeps is also known for its gourmet fare, prepared by noteworthy chefs in swanky settings.

Situated in midtown Manhattan, Triomphe is led by Swiss Executive Chef Florian Wehrli. The restaurant takes a 21st-century approach to fresh and healthy French-American cuisine, with each ingredient carefully chosen from local farmers and providers.

"Our Wellington has been a favourite for a while now," says chef Wehrli. "It is a twist on a classic recipe that we freshen up. We lighten the dish up and feature products grown locally for it."

Soups of every kind have been a big favourite around the area, too. "Noodle soup shops, bone broth and many more are popping up everywhere," he continues. "At Triomphe we have now several soup choices on the menu, including a classic made from scratch, baked lobster bisque, and a Harlequin soup where two different creations meet in the same bowl."

At Juni, an intimate 50-seat restaurant in the NoMad/Flatiron District neighbourhood, executive chef/partner Shaun Hergatt offers evolving flavours, tastes and textures via a constantly evolving seasonal tasting menu. The dishes follow the micro seasons,



showcasing a bounty of freshly foraged and sourced ingredients paired with Hergatt's precise technique and inspirations. Juni has been recognised with a prestigious Michelin star.

At The Ritz-Carlton New York, Battery Park, the hotel's restaurant, 2West, is a modern American bistro. Here, you can enjoy flavourful and classic comfort foods, such as horseradish crusted salmon, bacon-wrapped filet mignon, Brooklyn Lager French onion soup and truffle Parmesan fries. The spacious and elegant atmosphere features floor-to-ceiling windows with striking views overlooking New York Harbor, Ellis Island and the monumental Statue of Liberty.

HAVANA, CUBA

As the U.S. takes historic steps to chart a new course in relations with Cuba, it's expected that more American travellers will journey to the island nation just 90 miles south of Florida. What will tourists find in terms of food discoveries?

"The perception of Cuban cuisine is that it's one dimensional and bland, but that's not true," says chef David Guas, a New Orleans native who owns restaurants in D.C. and Virginia, hosts a Travel Channel series and has often appeared on NBC's "Today Show." "Because many of the dishes are one pot meals, it's layered, earthier and flavourful."

Guas, whose father is Cuban, has travelled to Havana and dined at the home-based family eateries known as *paladares*. They're more economical than pricier hotel and government run-restaurants and popular with locals, even though they're usually small. "Some of the places seat maybe 12 people," he says, citing favourites such as Paladar San Cristobal and La Mulata del Sabor.

Depending on the *paladar*, dishes may prove homey and traditional: roast chicken, sometimes made with sour orange sauce; black beans and rice, cooked together or separately; and *tostones*, which are crisp fried plantains. Then there's *picadillo*, a dish of ground beef, olives, onions and raisins over rice. "[Cooks] use oregano, olive oil, onions and garlic and red bell pepper. But they don't have a lot of heat like habanero peppers."

For dessert, guava-filled pastries are a sweet treat according to Guas, who was a James Beard Award finalist for his first cookbook, *DamGoodSweet*.

You can't come to Havana without sampling a rum-based cocktail, be it a mojito or daiquiri mixed with rum, lime and sugar. Writer Ernest Hemingway raised his glass at La Bodeguita del Medio, which is still drawing revellers. "Havana is special," says Guas. "I'm eager to return."

VISIT THESE TASTY DESTINATIONS WITH CAYMAN AIRWAYS

Cayman Airways offers non-stop flights from Grand Cayman to each of these delicious gateways. To book your flight call 345-949-2311 or 1-800-4-CAYMAN, contact your local agent, or visit caymanairways.com.