THE NEW NICARAGUA
Sunny Isles Beach – also known as Florida’s Riviera – is home to stylish boutiques, acclaimed restaurants and luxury beach resorts. Sunny Isles is mellower and more laid back than the sometimes frenetic scene in South Beach. Think entertaining and classic -- cool, sophisticated but hip. The grown up place. BY JOVANA ARNAUT
The Trump International Beach Resort, situated on the famed Collins Avenue, includes two swimming pools, two tennis courts, a beach club and pool bar. Relax in the Aquanox spa and salon. With four restaurants including Neomi’s which features classic American food blended with island flavours and the Fusion Lounge specializing in sushi and sashimi, you never leave the resort. The 32-storey hotel is part of a three condo complex that also includes the Trump Palace and the Trump Royale - all three towers are steps away from Sunny Isles’ glistening beach and popular activities. trumpmiami.com

Basil Park
The newest endeavour from restaurateurs Tim Andriola and Rodrigo Martinez. The bistro serves healthy and nutritious foods such as pasture raised and grass-fed meats, sustainable seafood, pressed juices and organic wines and beer. In keeping with their support of sustainable agriculture, they have partnered with Farmer Tamer Harpke of Harpke’s Family Farm in Hollywood to provide all of their organic produce and micro greens. Highly recommended, the “Power Bowl” from the lunch menu. It is filled with coconut milk curry, vegetables, chick peas, brown rice and avocado. basilpark.com

The Ancient Spanish Monastery
From the time it was built in Segovia, Spain in 1133 AD, the monastery has been seized, converted, dismantled, shipped to the U.S. and rebuilt. In 1964 it was presented to the Bishop of Florida and today the church has an active congregation and holds services on Sundays and weekdays in English and Spanish. spanishmonastery.com

Lincoln Road Mall in Miami
Settled underneath lush palm trees, Lincoln Road Mall is a bustling pedestrian walkway that boasts fashionable shops, more than 50 restaurants (my favourite: Sushi Samba), galleries including Art Centre/South Florida and the newly restored Colony Theatre which now serves as a performing arts venue. lincolnroadmall.com

The beach in Sunny Isles Beach
The sandy stretch peppered with lounge chairs, day beds and sun umbrellas, and the emerald, swaying water are perhaps the most obvious highlights of the destination. sunnyislesbeachmiami.com

Aventura Mall
Considered to be one of Miami’s top shopping establishments, the mall has more than 300 of the world’s most recognized retailers including Bloomingdale’s, Nordstrom, Macy’s, Cartier, Tiffany & Co., Louis Vuitton and Burberry – Tory Birch and Fendi recently joined the roster. Aventura also features a dozen restaurants, an interactive playground and a 24-screen AMC Movie Theatre with IMAX. Note: The Trump International offers a complimentary, luxury shuttle to Aventura. aventuramall.com

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What sets apart Sunny Isles Beach from that beach down the road (South Beach) is that it provides a more serene atmosphere. It still has that sexy Miami appeal – it’s just more refined.