

The parapet, with its fascinating crenellation and playful wave detail, seems to foretell the Art Deco era (still a decade away on Miami Beach). The wave detail is repeated under the center window. Small, circular floral plaques garnish the flanking second story windows. The prevailing Mediterranean Revival corner quoins are replaced with prophetic corner incisions.



**Dolores Guesthouse**

Three part symmetry is evident, though the central column is narrow and stepped back. Take a close look at that central column and locate the vertical striations, another popular Art Deco device, between the window and the stepped pediment.

- 4 Next door at 1424 Collins, the **Riviere** is a jumble of architectural details, with quoins on the lower corners, fluted pilasters on the upper corners, a scalloped sill and an extravagant central window surround. We had a hard time believing Albert Anis designed this structure, and that he did so in 1935 (one year before the more classic Nassau at location 2). The awnings over the windows are a contemporary afterthought.

The whimsical façade recalls an amusement park theme, a testament to the pervasive Miami Beach party atmosphere and sense of humor that crops up in the architecture from time to time. At the last building on this walk, Anis takes us to the Collins Avenue pinnacle of this expression.

Cross Collins to see that the Riviere offers more than just a pretty face. The street-side main entry theme is carried through along the side of the building, which culminates in a projecting end bay with a stepped parapet (center photo).



- 5 Look across Collins and a bit to the south to see the front of the elegant **President** at 1423 Collins Avenue.

Cut out of similar cloth as some of its larger brethren to the north on Collins Avenue, the 1936 L. Murray Dixon President has the traditional tripartite Deco form, but the central mass has been extended while the two wings have been foreshortened. There are the characteristic Miami Beach details: coral pink keystone facing on the first floor, horizontal banding, and those great nautical decorative wrought iron railings along the roofline. The recessed corners and framed windows of the President, though, show some International Style influence.

- 6 **Island House**, a 1949 A. H. Mathes design, is next to the Riviere at 1428 Collins.

You can see its Deco heritage in the three-part form, stepped parapet and ribbing on the upper façade, but most of the detail and ornamentation we associate with Art Deco have been stripped away. Mathes is beginning to reach in new architectural directions, as you will see later on this walk with some of his other designs. The unrelieved façade and canopy pole supports go beyond Moderne, towards Miami Modern (MiMo) Style.



This structure once had a fine entryway, as indicated by the coral rock facing around the unworthy replacement doors.

We especially like the second story corner windows, which are most likely giving the owners fits but are original. These vertically pivoting casement windows with transoms

are good examples of the Art Deco Style, providing a counterbalance to the horizontal spread. When we express concern that the windows of a particular building have been changed, keep these in mind.

- 7 A short walk brings you to the **Carlton Hotel** at 1433 Collins. The suave 1937 Henry Hohausser design is handsomely elongated, with a repeating mirror image pattern. The façade steps back twice from the central section to the corner windows and eyebrows, breaking up the long span.

The central mass is a bit unusual. It steps up as if to a pediment, but there is a window there, and obviously a room at that level. This small section is recessed, adding more texture to the stepped façade. This

feature plus the bas-relief design motifs combine to give the impression of a southwestern, Native American influenced structure. The central spandrel panel design is identical to those on the Cavalier on Ocean Drive, designed by Roy F. France in 1936.

Note the bands of three vertical stripes on either side of the central section, emphasizing its height. Their horizontal counterparts on the wings call attention to the window pattern, but also provide balance and a lower-profile illusion. The original window panes would have aligned with the racing stripes between the windows to reinforce the low-profile illusion.



The Carlton's entrance looks quite orderly, with two octagonal windows flanking the doorway. If you look carefully you can see a low eyebrow in the center just above the canopy. This is part of the original Hohausser design. The light weight poles and the flaring, too-thick canopy hint at a repair or "improvement," suggesting a fifties or sixties renovation. Stucco has been applied over the original keystone facing.

Step into the lobby to see the fine compass rose design on the terrazzo floor. The ethereal, slightly erotic wall murals are contemporary.

➤ Continue to the intersection of Collins and Espanola Way.

## 8 **Jerry's Famous Deli** is across Espanola at 1450 Collins Avenue.

This dramatic wrap-around corner building, a Henry Hohausser masterpiece, opened as Hoffman's Cafeteria in 1940. Life continued as a series of nightclubs. It's still known by one of its latter day names, the **Warsaw Ballroom**, but since 2002 it has housed Jerry's Famous Deli, a good place for food any time of the day or night.

Jerry's is reminiscent of the bow of a tugboat cutting through the waves. The nautical imagery continues with a central "smokestack," flagpoles and terrific cutout portholes on the parapet. The wide, curving canopy at the entry smoothly rounds the corner. On the sides, long eyebrows and incised speed bands pick up the motion, stretching the wings out in either direction.

Streamline Moderne designs are meant to convey horizontal motion; balance is achieved by introducing vertical elements. Balance is elo-

quently expressed here, in the tall rounded central tower and pylons flanking the entry. Note the “take-out” windows in rounded columns to either side of the door.



The current exterior is somewhat starkly painted, which is much better than the tacky black and gold scheme of its clubbing days but not as showy as the pastel yellows and lavenders of the late eighties. The white and gray color scheme is actually closer to the original South Beach palette.

You really want to go inside the deli, as the interior is in as beautiful condition as the exterior. If you have already eaten or can't spare the time, at least take a look through the glass, as the owners have done a wonderful job of preserving and recreating the period. This place is really a treat!



The most arresting interior feature is the row of glass and tile columns running the length of the dining room. Partway up each column is a splendid glass and metal trimmed floral, or sunburst, shaped detail.

If you walk to the elevated area at the back of the room you can see decorative plaster “urns” joining these details to the ceiling. From that angle, the tops of the columns look like exotic inverted mushrooms.

Decorative plaster is used throughout the interior; the crown molding at the ceiling, the scallop motif flanking the tile pilasters between the windows, and the faux “curtains” on the rear wall are all original. Marble was not a widely used material in South Beach, but here pink marble appears at the base of the columns and the window sills. The restored terrazzo floor, furnishings and lighting reproduce the period style brilliantly. Be sure to look up at the drum skylight and the etched glass over the door as you exit.

- 9 As you exit Jerry’s, you will see the **Grillfish** on the other corner (1444 Collins). This is also a 1940 Henry Hohauser commercial building, designed to thematically reflect the classic lines of the Warsaw. The doors and surrounding glass have been significantly altered, but the building still retains a nicely rounded cut-corner entry and stone panels. Continuous racing stripes, fluted eyebrows and bands of glass block give it a sleek air. The Grillfish originally housed a drug store.
- 10 Pass by Jerry’s sidewalk tables and take a few steps north into the welcoming arms of **Haddon Hall**, at 1500 Collins. These arms once encompassed a fine garden.

Designed in 1941 by L. Murray Dixon, the hotel opened just in time to be used as quarters by the U.S. Army Air Corps when Miami Beach became a World War II training area.



With its sweeping curves, wrap-around windows and sinuous eyebrows, Haddon Hall embodies the liveliness and movement inherent in Streamline Moderne Style, in a jumbo sized, symmetrical package.

Haddon Hall had a bit more decoration at one time, including recessed neon lighting on the upper central section and elegant cast masonry screens by sculptor Robert M. Schwartz, high on the center parapet. Where today we see glass block along the roofline, there were more decorative screens.

At some point during the lifetime of this building, as part of a renovation, the screens were filled in and covered with cement. Subsequently, as part of another renovation, they were uncovered but not restored. Two accessible examples are located on the walls to either side of the entry.

The porch follows the curves of the building, bounded by decorative stone railings. On the porch entry's terrazzo floor there is a design in a four-point "star" or "flower" motif. Inside the lobby you are greeted by a fine 'HH' design in the terrazzo floor. The corner reception desk is paneled with reddish brown tinted keystone. Softly curved molded ceilings hold recessed lighting.

- 11 When you emerge from Haddon Hall, locate the hotel on the corner diagonally opposite you, at 1501 Collins Avenue.

This is the **Bancroft Hotel**, designed in 1939 by Albert Anis. Unlike many other Collins Avenue hotels, the Bancroft is set back a bit from the street.

Racing stripes accentuate horizontal movement as the building turns the corner from right to left. After it turns the corner, the structure steps back in a series of receding planes.



Anis loved to use the interplay of geometric patterns in his designs. We can see how the sharp angles of the glass block tower contrast with the curving corner and overall horizontal emphasis.

What you see, though, is partly an illusion. If you look closely at the upper windows along 15<sup>th</sup> Street you will notice that they are not clear. Large portions of the Bancroft were gutted to accommodate a parking garage for the Ocean Steps shopping center on Ocean Drive, and the upper floors are no longer in alignment with the windows.

Cross Collins Avenue to the Bancroft's porch, where you can take in the Greek theme carving at the front by well known South Florida muralist Earl LaPan. At the entry, there is a droll glass block and tile fountain of geometric totem design. The porch terrazzo is nearly flawless, and the name of the hotel emblazoned with a wave highlight is just perfect.