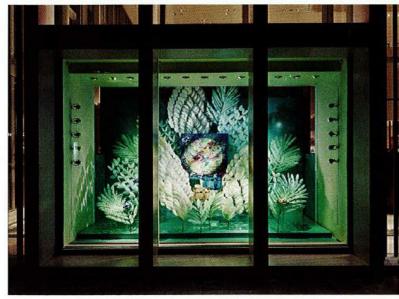


CITIES -- ASPEN CHICAGO DALLAS/FORT WORTH HOUSTON LAS VEGAS LOS ANGELES MIAMI NEW YORK ORANGE COUNTY PALM BEACH SAN FRANCISCO





Florida Flagship Sails

Need a Birkin before dinner? It's easier than ever thanks to Hermes' new 13,000-square-foot flagship in the Miami Design District. Denis Montel, artistic director for architecture firm RDAI, channeled the city's minimalist mood and lush vegetation, even planting a tropical Guiana chestnut tree at the store's entrance. His façade-as-forest is one of Hermès USA president and CEO Robert Chavez's favorite aspects. "Its white metal tubing is a real expression of Miami, with lightness and elegant simplicity," says Chavez, who's also fond of the staircase's smooth, undulating curves. "It seduces you to wander up and gives the store a great architectural feeling." With design in its very name, the neighborhood provides the perfect excuse to display the brand's home collections, as well as to house the only U.S. shop-in-shop for sister brand Saint-Louis crystal on the ground level. Among the latter's glittering

wares are Adrien Rovero's limited-edition Opercule boxes. Fashion-wise, the roomier space means more watches, jewelry and women's shoes. Still searching for that elusive Birkin? Shoot straight to the top for handbags. Diehard collectors of signature silk scarves can score an exclusive Flamingo Party motif. "It expresses the vibrancy of the market," says Chavez, who's no stranger to local museums and Cuban cuisine. "It's a very exciting city to blend work with some fun."

163 NE 39th Street; hermes.com



EAST HEADS WEST

Brickell imports an Asian boutique hotel brand

Under construction for years, the massive mainland enclave Brickell City Centre has begun to take shape. **East Miami**, the first U.S. foray for the Asia-based Swire Hotels' brand, plans to open for business in time for the nearby Miami Open. Arquitectonica designed the tower with 352 rooms and residences, not to mention a 20,000-square-foot, triple-pool aquatic experience. Diners can look forward to Quinto La Huella, an outpost of the famed Uruguayan parrilla Parador La Huella, specializing in grilled meats and seafood. "Our chefs tested different regional red and white oaks for aroma and burning qualities," says co-owner Martin Pittaluga. "They're playing with wild red snapper, seasonal farm veggies and dulce de leche made in town." 788 Brickell Plaza; east-miami.com