

# A Sun-Filled Weekend in Greater Fort Lauderdale



A GIRL ABOUT CHICAGO

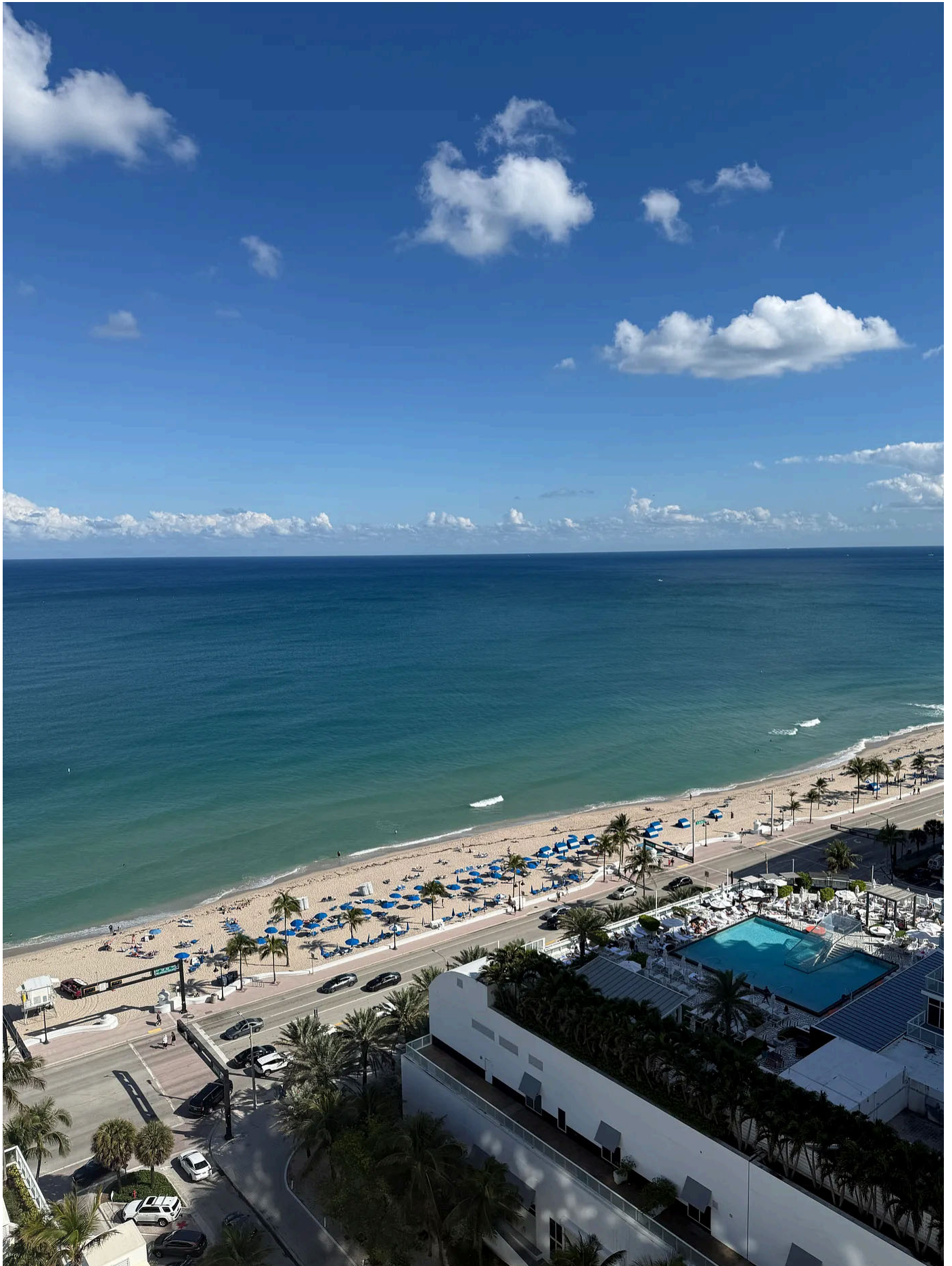
MAR 24, 2025



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I was lucky enough to spend three days in beautiful Greater Fort Lauderdale in late February, where I got a chance to escape the never-ending winter in Chicago (even just for a few days).

The region is surprisingly diverse, serving as a cultural melting pot with 31 municipalities. My mom and I spent some quality time together exploring the beautiful golden beaches, delicious cuisine, and cultural offerings of this South Florida destination. Here's how we spent our time!





## ***Day 1***

We indulged in a luxe 9 hours of sleep, and started off our day with an early lunch at [Evelyn's](#). This beautiful restaurant is located at the Four Seasons Fort Lauderdale, a stunning hotel located right along Fort Lauderdale Beach.

The restaurant specializes in Mediterranean inspired flavors, and we especially loved the various spreads we tried—the charred red pepper and labneh were standouts. We also ordered the Evelyn's chicken shawarma wrap and the Maine lobster roll, which we enjoyed while taking in the gorgeous waterfront views.







After lunch, we headed to the [Bonnet House Museum & Gardens](#), a marvelous and historic South Florida home. Added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, is a must-visit spot for anyone looking for a moment of zen surrounded by sounds nature.

The property, dating back to the early 20th century, was so well-preserved and adorned with beautiful lush greenery. As lovers of all things history, architecture, and design, my mom and I especially loved this visit, and would probably say it was one of the highlights of our trip.

We also learned the home has many connections to Chicago! Frederic Clay Bartlett, Chicago-born artist, built this home on oceanfront land, and upon his wife's passing he even presented his collection to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1926. It was a treat learning about the history of the home, and I'd encourage anyone visiting the region to book a tour at Bonnet House!

















We then drove to [Las Olas Boulevard](#), the premier dining and retail destination in the city. We checked out a few art galleries, stopped into some local shops where I found the most adorable summer hat, and treated ourselves to some delicious midday gelato at Pan'e Dolci Italian Bakery.

From Las Olas, we actually walked a few blocks to head to the closest pick-up point for the [Fort Lauderdale Water Taxi](#). You can catch the water taxi at 30+ stops, and there are many different available routes to choose from. From vibrant waterfront restaurants to scenic parks, the water taxi is the best way to explore Greater Fort Lauderdale and tailor your trip to your interests.

We caught the water taxi just before golden hour, and were rewarded with the most exquisite waterfront sunset views—it's such a great way to enjoy the sights of the city. After all, there's a reason Fort Lauderdale is known as the "Venice of America"!







To cap off a wonderful first day, we enjoyed a fabulous dinner at [Coconuts](#), located on the waterfront. This restaurant is a favorite among locals, and offers the perfect place to watch the boats cruise by along the Intracoastal waterways. The quality of the seafood was impressive, and our server enthusiastically shared her personal recommendations with us, which were all outstanding.

If there's one thing you order, you must try their famous "Scoobies" starter, the house specialty consisting of blue crab fried with generous amounts of garlic. These lollipop-like starters were unbelievable, and full of meaty, fresh crab. Coconuts was every seafood lover's dream, and a Fort Lauderdale staple for good reason.



**COORUTS**  
Let's Begin

**USUAL SUSPECTS**  
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**Sides...**  
• COLE SLAW 5  
• DEVILED EGGS 6  
• PIGEON PEAS & RICE 5  
• THICK SLICED TOMATOES 5  
• DAILY VEGETABLE 5  
• FRIES 5





## **Day 2**

We kicked off day two with some coffee and pastries at [Archibalds Village Bakery](#), a local bakery with top notch baked goods and a charming outdoor patio. We fueled ourselves with some caffeine before driving about a half hour to the Hollywood Beach Broadwalk.

Consisting of a ~2.5 mile promenade along the Atlantic, this is a beautiful stretch of beachfront, offering tons of restaurants, bars, and shops. We enjoyed some time out on the beach, before heading to [7 Tables on the Beach](#) for an authentic Peruvian lunch. The ceviche was fresh, and the views right along the water were truly hard to beat.







We headed back to our hotel (we stayed at the [Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort](#) and got in some more R&R at the hotel pool. The oceanfront views were hard to be and the frozen piña coladas didn't hurt either!







After we freshened up, we checked out [The Katherine](#) for dinner. Chef Timon Balloo and his wife, Marissa Katherine, opened this intimate, James Beard nominated neighborhood restaurant with a menu inspired from their travels all across the globe. The flavors are reflected in their eclectic menu, with unique flavor pairings that just simply work. We especially loved the zatar & yogurt rubbed swordfish kabobs, which came with eggplant, roasted tomato, and tahini.

For a quick post-dinner nightcap, we headed to [The Wilder](#), a moody cocktail bar and lounge located right next door. We were bummed to miss their burlesque performance, which they frequently offer on Friday nights, as well as during their Sunday brunch service.

## ***Day 3***

Our last day in Greater Fort Lauderdale was especially memorable—we started our day with a fantastic brunch at [Top Hat Deli](#), a beloved old-school joint with solid deli classics. We split the corned beef hash and reuben, and both dishes were quite impressive. The cucumber salad offered the perfect crispy and refreshing bite, while the corned beef itself was perfectly seasoned, and slightly tangy with a meaty richness.

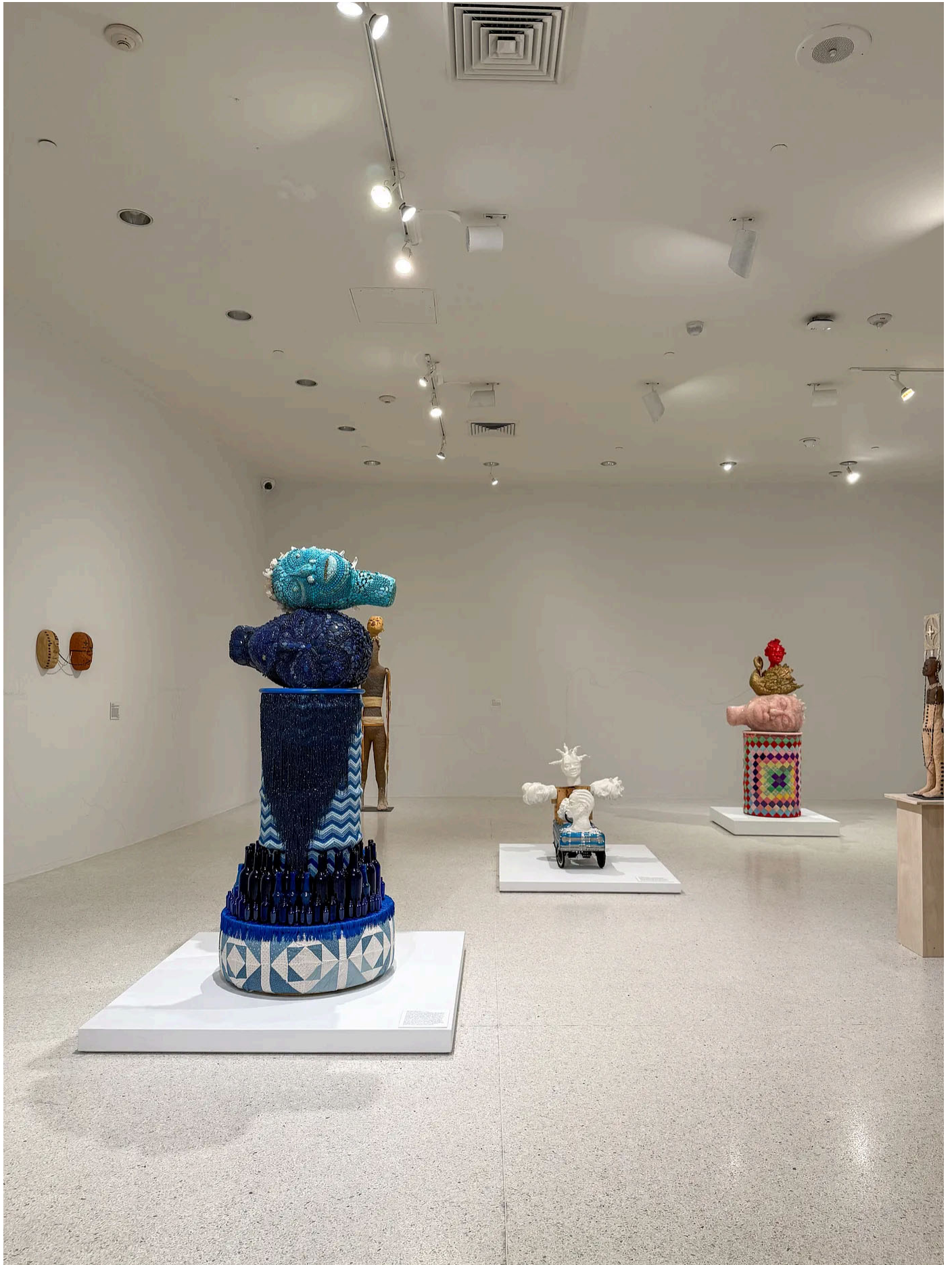






Full from an indulgent lunch, we decided to visit [NSU Art Museum](#) to digest while immersing ourselves in the art world. The museum contains over 6,000 works, and currently offers six impressive exhibitions, including a beautiful exhibition highlighting famed photographer Joel Meyerowitz's impressive work.

We also really enjoyed the sculptural work of two emerging artists, Rose B. Simpson and Vanessa German. Both artists address issues of structural racism and heteropatriarchy in our modern world through thought-provoking pieces.







After an afternoon at the museum, we couldn't resist a trip to the nearby mall for some retail therapy. We had heard amazing things about [The Colonnade at Sawgrass Mill](#), South Florida's renowned outlet shopping destination. The luxury brands offered here were impressive—including Prada, Bottega Veneta, Saint Laurent, Zimmermann, and more. The deals were genuinely unbelievable, and we scored some incredible bargains during our visit!







Our final meal was at [Heritage](#), located in the hip Flagler Village neighborhood. The atmosphere was great from the moment we walked in—we were instantly drawn in by the open kitchen and lively dining room. Most importantly, the food itself was phenomenal. We really loved the house-made bucatini pasta with clams, and the pizza was topped with simple yet high-quality ingredients. This is definitely a must-book dining experience, as reservations can be difficult to come by.







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There are so many different ways to enjoy your time in Greater Fort Lauderdale, but think we did a good job of checking out all of the area staples while mixing in both some sun and culture during our short weekend getaway. Make sure to save this guide for all the must-dos while visiting this South Florida destination!

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