

ORLANDO

SIGNATURE

NOVEMBER 2015

The Social Scene
plus great dresses for
your next gala

5 New resorts
for a weekend
escape

Festive Ideas

Pumpkin pleasers
Dazzling tables
Creative cocktails

Your
Holiday
gift guide

Northeast Edition





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ESCAPE 74 Your Next Weekend Getaway

We may not be snowbirds, but why should those Northerners have all the fun at Florida's great resorts this time of year? We showcase five brand-new properties and tell you why they're perfect for a mini-vacay.

Photo courtesy of The Gates Hotel, Key West



ESCAPE

The Gates Hotel, Key West

Set on the south end of Key West, this boutique property is away from all the cacophony of Duval Street.

Best For >> Those who want to balance a Key West vacation with more tranquility than revelry.

The Experience >> Stay near Duval Street and you'll never sleep — roasters, revelers and other things that go bump in the night and throughout the day are practically a 24-7 guarantee. However the Gates, on the opposite end of the island, offers serious serenity in an old-school Key West setting that pays homage to Prohibition rum-runners, Ernest Hemingway and the history of this strategic military stronghold just 90 miles from Cuba. The local Key West First Legal Rum Distillery and Rodriguez Cigar Factory create rum and cigars exclusively for guests, enjoyed at the poolside Rum Row bar and cigar patio.

The Room >> Sun-bleached wood tones in flooring and hand-washed cypress platform beds, a burlap bed throw, sliding wooden bathroom doors and local photos from de la Gallery, located on Duval Street, give each room a rustic and simple homespun feel. Gray and white robes are a nice departure from the typical white, and cigar neophytes can brush up on their knowledge with an in-room cigar compendium.

Take a Spin >> Guests can rent fashionable blue-and-white Martone bicycles as an alternative to high-priced taxis (Uber did not work here) and pedal their way to Duval Street and through Old Town's narrow streets, past historic gingerbread-trimmed homes.

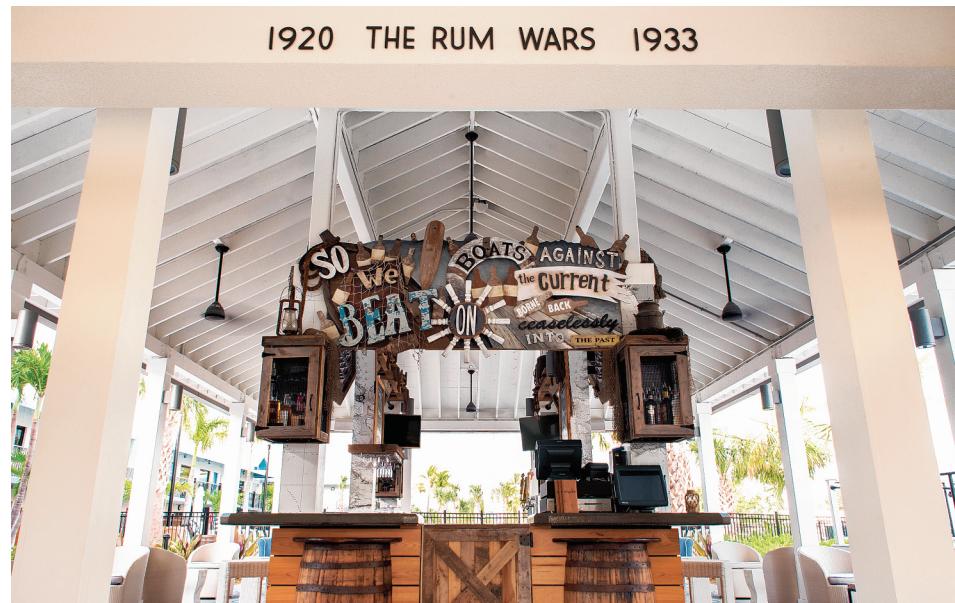
Unique Eats >> The Blind Pig food truck, permanently parked at the hotel, serves tapas and bite-size menu items for breakfast, lunch and dinner — many with a Cuban or conch-fusion twist. Try the buttery 12-hour braised short ribs, locally caught fish and yummy snacks, including homemade chips and truffle popcorn.

Past Meets Future >> The Gates' current low-slung two-story building reminiscent of Florida's motels of the 1950s — but much more chic — will be joined in 2016 by the four-floor Gates Hotel 2.0, introducing a fitness center, spa and additional dining options to guests.

gateshotelkeywest.com

—Nanci Theoret

Photos courtesy of The Gates Hotel



From top: A lively watering hole, the poolside Rum Row bar serves Cuba Libres and other rum-centric drinks; the swimming pool area has a sophisticated SoBe vibe; at the funky Blind Pig food truck, a staple at the Gates, guests can order tasty pigs in a blanket along with seasoned fries.