



PULSE / SCENE

by JOHN HOOD photography by SETH BROWARNICK/RED EYE PRODUCTION

Inside Wall

## BREACHING WALL

GETTING PAST THE ROPES INTO THE W'S WONDROUS NEW HOTSPOT

Like other hotel-set hotspots on South Beach, in order to get where you're going you've gotta first thread through an immaculate lobby. Unlike, say, the Shore Club or the Florida Room, you won't be taking in the feel of another retrofit wonder on your way; you'll be taking in the gleam and the glam of a whole new edifice. Something that may hark back somewhat to the Strip's heyday, but built to ensure that there will be many more heydays to come.

We mean Miami Beach's W Hotel. Home of the ultra-exclusive new hang called Wall.

First things first: As its name implies, Wall is no easy breach.

At 4,000 square feet and with a capacity of just 350, they've no choice but to limit admittance to only the most well-connected visitors and residents. In fact, much of Wall's clientele is culled right from the property itself, which consists of 203 condo-hotel units, each of their own stunning display.

But if you happen to be among the chosen few, merely slipping past Wall's velvet ropes and through its beveled bronze doors makes you feel as if you belonged all along. The hue of promise, the embrace of privilege, the notion of utter exclusivity — it's all part and parcel of what Wall represents.

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Even on paper, Wall is formidable. The first-time pairing of KNR and The Opium Group, it's got success embedded in the very names behind its formation. KNR is Rony Seikaly, Karim Masri and Nicola Siervo, the last two being the pair behind Mokai and Quattro (as well as the just-opened Solea, right next door). Roman Jones and brothers Eric and Frances Milon's Opium Group currently boast Mansion, Set, Louis, Prive Vegas and Opium Hard Rock.

And if having two of the most successful partnerships in South Beach partnering up on a project doesn't spell instant acclaim to you, well, you need a better spell checker. These cats know what makes a night move, not just as a club or a party, but as an experience that lingers on well after the sun has risen on a brand-new day.

Actually, for all of Wall's throwback, Rat Pack-era feel, there's something of the brand-new day about this place, too — and of course, something of the brand-new night. Maybe it's in the

sophisticate's touch that Anna Busta of New York's Studio B designed into the venue, the lush and the plush of a tomorrow yet to come. Or perhaps it's just the fact that everything glistens. Whatever it is, it works, and it works marvelously.

We shan't take the time to list each and every one of Wall's features. But we will say that once the black-lacquer front bar and its LED-backed wall fall away to the deep-seated luxury within, you'll be embraced in a way no one has been since the heady days of Hollywood glamour. Picture a place circa The Brown Derby, then add that patented South Beach swing and you'll get some of the idea. Imagine Hedy Lamar rubbing shoulders with Greta Garbo, while Gable and Lombard look on, and you'll get some more. Mostly though, envision a time when gentlemen were gentlemen, ladies were ladies, and everyone rose to the occasion.

Tough to get in? You betcha. But worth every ounce of earn it takes to do so. Because if Wall is one thing at all, it is an absolute occasion.

