

Why Miami's Coconut Grove Neighborhood Has Become a Real Estate Hotspot

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Once bohemian and artsy, the leafy bayside enclave of Miami's Coconut Grove has gone decidedly upscale. In 2022, the suburb was home to Miami's priciest residential real estate transaction when entrepreneur and Citadel CEO Ken Griffin paid \$106 million for two mansions on a combined lot with expansive bayfront frontage and unobstructed views. Jill Hertzberg of the Jills Zeder Group at Coldwell Banker Realty, who represented Griffin, describes the 4-acre estate as akin to a Picasso and "priceless."

The pandemic accelerated the Grove's popularity, attracting transplants from New York, Chicago (such as Griffin) and California due to its proximity to all things great about Miami — including well-regarded private schools, a relatively quick drive to downtown, sophisticated dining, bayside parks and the revitalized Dinner Key pleasure boat marina. According to One Sotheby's Intl. Realty's February Florida East Coast Market Report, median single-family-home prices in Coconut Grove were up 43.5% year-over-year.

"I personally believe Coconut Grove is one of the most sought-after neighborhoods in the entire country," says David Martin, CEO of Terra, the development company behind three architecturally distinguished, residential projects along Bayshore Drive: the Grove at Grand Bay (96 residences in two towers), Park Grove (designed by Rem Koolhaas/OMA) and the Mr. C Residences (231 residences in two, 21-story, Arquitectonica-designed towers, which sold out before completion). Each is sited to take advantage of views of nearby Biscayne Bay in the highly walkable neighborhood. Upcoming for Terra is Grove Central, a mixed-use development with 402 apartments adjacent to the Metrorail on Coconut Grove's northern border.

"People feel a sense of place and community here. It's a neighborhood where people can plant a flag," Martin says, noting the appeal to families.

Liz Hogan, vice president of luxury sales at Compass Florida, also sees the Grove's ongoing evolution as a younger demographic moves in.

"People who relocated love the proximity to the water," she says, although demand far outstrips supply of waterfront homes. The plentiful Florida live oaks and other mature trees of the Grove's lush canopy add to the tropical vibe.

"You can have the most incredible standard of living in the Grove, plus the real estate value's always going up — it's an extraordinary place," Hertzberg says.

Hogan says the area has really taken off post-pandemic, with agents constantly searching for available condo

units and competitive selling scenarios for turnkey, single-family homes. Her sale in summer 2022 of Christian Slater's Spanish Revival-style, three-bedroom, 2½-bath home with guesthouse, on one of the Grove's coveted side streets, garnered multiple offers and sold in one day above asking at \$4.26 million. While pricing per foot varies, currently buyers can expect to pay between \$1,150 per sq.-ft. and \$1,200 per sq.-ft. for new construction.

Complementing the residential boom is the ongoing remake of Coconut Grove's main retail and dining district. Among the major efforts: a complete remodel of the dated, 1990-built CocoWalk outdoor shopping mall with a new look, stylish tenants and an office building. The city of Miami, in partnership with private developers and \$10 million in FEMA funds granted in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, recently oversaw a \$70 million renovation of the waterfront Dinner Key Marina, replacing longtime tenants and warehouses with the sleek new Bayshore Club bar and grill, a broad esplanade and new boat docks with more restaurants and retail to come. On Florida Avenue, the \$50 million renovation of the 179-room Mayfair House Hotel & Garden included a trendy rooftop bar and updated rooms, and the brought the Gaudi-inspired hotel back to life.

Vita on Grove Isle, made up of 65-ultra luxury residences on a private island, topped by 12 duplex-style, Biscayne Bay-facing penthouses (pricing starts at \$12 million for penthouses) is expected to see its groundbreaking in April. The curving, seven-story edifice promises highest-end finishes, impressive Biscayne Bay water views and a boutique feel, says Christine Martinez de Castro, vice president marketing and sales, CMC Group, the developer of the project and the nearby Grovenor House (166 units on 32 floors).

"The appeal of Coconut Grove has always been there," she says. "Now we're gaining national attention."