

Italian Influence Has Miami Real Estate Embracing La Dolce Vita

By Jeffrey Steele

Miami has long been known as Latin America's unofficial northern capital. As much as Latin culture reigns in Miami, though, today's Miamians seem as enamored of another country's influence as they are Central and South American cues.

You see, Spanish is not the only Romance Language on residents' lips these days, given Italian cultural ascendance. Italy's imprint on the Magic City is seen everywhere, from hospitality brands like Bulgari Hotels & Resorts to a near infinite array of fine Italian restaurants, ranging from Carbone and Contessa from Major Food Group to MAMO from New Yorker Mikael Mammoliti.

And make no mistake: Italian-inspired design and style has also made its way into the city's real estate developments.

These include luxury condominium projects VITA at Grove Isle and ONDA Residences, each sporting Italian finishes and materials; the 57-story luxury condominium Missoni Baia Miami from OKO Group and Cain International, situated in the Edgewater enclave; and Cipriani Residences Miami, a ground-up development in Miami's Brickell nook from South Florida's Mast Capital and the Italian Cipriani family, globally known for its restaurants, event spaces and nightlife venues.

Not to be overlooked is VILLA Miami, the 55-story boutique residences from TERRA and One Thousand Group, capturing intrigue as a residential experience provided by Major Food Group (MFG), the hospitality firm behind Carbone and Contessa. MFG will design and curate the tower's lifestyle experience from early morn through late evening.

Italian imports

Arguing nobody knows Italian design like born-and-bred Italians, Ugo Colombo, CMC Group founder, points as examples to himself, Onda Residences co-developer Valerio Morabito and their design partners Molteni&C and A++ Human Sustainable Architecture with Vita at Grove Isle. All are direct-from-Italy imports, "fully immersed in the world of fine craftsmanship and elegant, sophisticated architecture and interior design." So says Milan native Colombo, a former Ferrari racecar driver, owner of THE COLLECTION car dealership in Miami suburb Coral Gables and now a luxury residential developer.

"At both Onda and Vita, we are creating timeless, quality residential developments. Features such

as the beautiful rooftop terraces, pools overlooking the sparkling waters of Biscayne Bay and an on-site Italian restaurant showcase all aspects of 'La Dolce Vita.' We have translated what it means to live in true luxury for the modern buyer."

Missoni Baia is the world's first branded residential tower from Italian fashion house Missoni. The brand has placed its multihued design palette and Missoni Home furniture collection throughout the towers' interiors.

The 80-story-tall Cipriani Residences Miami will feature 397 luxury condominium units, 18,000 square feet of commercial space and 2,472 spaces for bicycles. Hallmarks will include resort-style amenities and classic Italian cuisine, which residents can savor in a private restaurant, as well as via in-home dining and 24-hour catering services.

Located in Edgewater but inspired by the charming villas of Italy, VILLA Miami will offer residents 20,000 square feet of restaurant amenities. Owners will be able to savor an onsite eatery serving Italian coastal fare, as well as calling on private chef services. "VILLA's Italian DNA is infused throughout all aspects, from the design to programming, amenities and services," says Terra CEO David Martin.

"The project brings together two of the most brilliant minds in design and hospitality, Vicky Charles and Mario Carbone, who collaborated for the first time to design VILLA's kitchens, a major focal point for our buyers."

Because this is MFG's first residential tower, Charles incorporated the brand's robust Italian legacy into all its dining, leisure and wellness offerings. "The design team created a feeling reminiscent of Lake Como or the Amalfi Coast that is present throughout the project," Martin added. "It's been an instant point of interest for potential buyers."

All of which confirms that one no longer has to travel to Rome to experience La Dolce Vita. It's as close as that western Italian outpost, the Magic City.