

What Makes Miami Fashion Week Different From All The Other Fashion Weeks Around The World?



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Roberto Cavalli Runway lineup at Miami Fashion Week 2019 COURTESY OF MIAMI FASHION WEEK

The material motivations of fashion week, and its emotional means of expression, suggest to the modern observer certain qualities of the industry overall. For it is here in the realm of the fashion cognoscenti where it seems reasonable that people would be more interested in expressing their peculiarities, their distinct personalities and their individuality. But we must comprehend that this quite reasonable expectation is a distortion. The designers and brands enthusiastically

produce shows to thrill and excite us which stems from the modern notion that comes from an opposition between nature and culture. No matter what the week showcases, the consumers will purchase according to need and cultural arrangements. Expression as the presentation of emotion is seemingly a general principle which includes such practices as music, video and event art.

Today, the sheer recounting of all the details is no longer sufficient as technology takes the lead in getting the message out at lightning speed. As most of you are already aware, the immediacy for the onlookers to create a live stream in real time has played a crucial role during fashion week. The theory of expression is incompatible with the idea of individuality and expressive personality. If the sheer recital of what I've seen felt experienced without any filtering, shaping or falsifying of my experience, then I have done my job right. I do not prefer to gain 60K likes on social media but rather would like to report objectively however good or bad that may be. It would be a mistake to view fashion historicism as an isolated incident without a global perspective. The growth strategy of MIAFW is now reaching a comfortable elevation in both fantasy of authority and the erasure of limits on the public. Let me put this another way: Fashion week does not make the spectators dependent upon them- that notion of dependence comes from a traditional notion of charismatic power appropriate for describing resort wear.



Honorary President of Miami Fashion Week, Antonio Banderas COURTESY OF MIAMI FASHION WEEK

Billed as the second largest fashion week in the USA and recognized by the [CFDA](#) Miami Fashion Week (MIAFW) has radically altered the bridge of codes of belief between resort wear and consumers. The differentiating factors of MIAFW including *runway shows, designer line-ups, VIP events, galas, charity components and celebrities* create the unpredictability of MIAFW. In addition to specializing in resort wear, the event takes on legal issues such as eco-fashion, sustainability, innovation and production and brings them to the forefront through the master classes that are arranged during the week.

A little history on resort wear. Resort wear is a clothing style. But more importantly, it is a year round style. It is also referred to as cruise wear but let's stick with resort wear for now and forever. The style originated to please very affluent customers who were expected to spend the post-Christmas/New Year's weeks in warm-weather climates. If you had ever been on vacation and were not able to find apparel to fit your needs, you can easily understand why design houses have set out to gain market segmentation in this arena. More recently, designers, store buyers, and the media are viewing "resort wear" as a specialized year-round

clothing style and fashion season. Henceforth, Miami Fashion Week is at the forefront of an enormous global business. You see, way back when, Palm Beach, San Juan and St. Barth had been holiday destinations but they are now places of year-round living for more affluent customers. It has become a cross-cultural style that signifies relaxation, affluence, and appreciation of nature which displays a sense of style to the wearer. Resort wear is generally made from lightweight and breathable fabrics. It is characterized by the "nautical" style, inspired by sailor and yachting themes.



The importance of resort-wear collections finding its home in Miami seems to be spot on. Generally speaking, resort collections have an increasingly vital economic impact on major fashion brands and retailers especially as the collections are usually offered as exclusive capsule collections with limited availability and higher price points. As the only resort fashion week in America, MIAFW's allure of runway shows and events also compliments street style that is found here in Miami with the organic rise of Latino style which has established its own fashion 'voice' globally. MIAFW has embraced the resort season and the Latino community has given MIAFW its own voice to put their mark on the resort collections – very open and diverse. As resort fashion continues to progress, MIAFW continues to be the U.S. home to that season and the world's only international platform focused exclusively on resort lines, bringing hundreds of tastemakers, stylists, designers, retail buyers, influencers, media, bloggers, and celebrities to Miami. The business of resort fashion in the U.S. capitalizes on what was a missed opportunity for so many years on behalf of the city and the fashion landscape. Miami is a global city that has become a platform for international fashion designers. As a destination that has and will always have the vacation, cruise, easy jet-setting allure, over the years, there has been a significant spike where Miami has emerged into the "resort destination" for the world's wealthiest. In a sense, those who dream and those who live this lifestyle look to Miami as a fashion resort model for their own lives.

[Miami Fashion Week](#) (MIAFW) officially kicked off Wednesday, May 30 this year with a style-studded press conference. MIAFW CEO **Julio Iranzo** took the stage to welcome guests and introduce Honorary President **Antonio Banderas**. The conference was focused on the imminent global recognition of Miami as a fashion capital among New York, Milan, Paris and London since being named the second largest fashion week in the United States. Conversations also spanned topics of sustainability in the fashion industry, the evolution of Miami Fashion Week and the importance of giving back to the community. Later that evening festivities began with the international fashion community filling the second level of [Saks Fifth Avenue](#) in [Brickell City Centre](#) (BCC) for the official

MIAFW kick-off party. Stylized looks from each of the twelve designers showing at MIAFW were staged throughout the anchor store on models as onlookers enjoyed bites and beverages courtesy of [Casa Tua Cucina](#). The style-studded soirée was followed by the much-anticipated opening runway show that debuted Venezuelan-born designer **Oscar Carvalho**'s 2019 resort collection. Starting on Miami time, the collection celebrated art, nature and femininity – a stunning contrast to the backdrop of Brickell City Centre's futuristic architecture. Day two of MIAFW commenced with the debut of **Miami Fashion Week Summit**, a series running parallel to each day's runway shows in Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus' auditorium. The program focused on the fashion industry's sustainable and ethical issues with top fashion experts **Sass Brown**, founding dean of Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation, **Javier Goyeneche**, founder and president of ECOALF, and **Kavita Parmar**, founder of The IOU Project.



Later that evening, guests arrived at the Ice Palace Film Studios, the official home of MIAFW, and experienced a runway by the creative students of [Miami Fashion Institute](#) at [Miami Dade College](#). To my delight, I am noticing the creative input of students at fashion weeks around the world. It give a fresh perspective. The collections included bold, colorful and futuristic clothing, setting the bar high for the next generation of fashion aficionados. The night concluded with Miami's very own, **Rene Ruiz**, who debuted his new brand "**RENE by RR.**" With ethical fashion being a global topic, Ruiz broke through sustainability by putting a glam spin on casual resort wear with upcycled materials. Day three of MIAFW continued with the educational series of **Miami Fashion Week Summit** hosted by internationally recognized model **Valeria Mazza**. **Dr. Carmen Hijosa**, founder and CEO of Piñatex, opened the floor and spoke on sustainable materials, **Juan Pedro Moreno**, president of Accenture, followed and commented on the impact of digital, **Francois Van Den Abeele**, founder of Sea2see, closed the program on topics of sea waste disrupting fashion. Back at the Ice Palace Film Studios, Mexican fashion designer, **Benito Santos**, opened the night with looks inspired by Greek mythology which in my estimation is in sync and of the moment. Ready-to-wear resort wear highlighting gold accents and gladiator sandals. Spanish designer **Ágatha Ruiz de la Prada** followed with her models bouncing with energy, blowing kisses and getting cheeky on the runway. With the brand's signature fun-loving style, the exclusive resort collection unleashed a rainbow-spanning palette that was smacked with stripes, hearts and patterns.

The evening concluded with MIAFW Honorary President **Antonio Banderas Benefit Gala**, with all proceeds supporting [Nicklaus Children's Hospital Foundation](#) and [Fundación Lágrimas y Favores](#). The annual black-tie event featured sit-down dinner, live auction and live entertainment by **Fanny Lu** (Colombian artist).

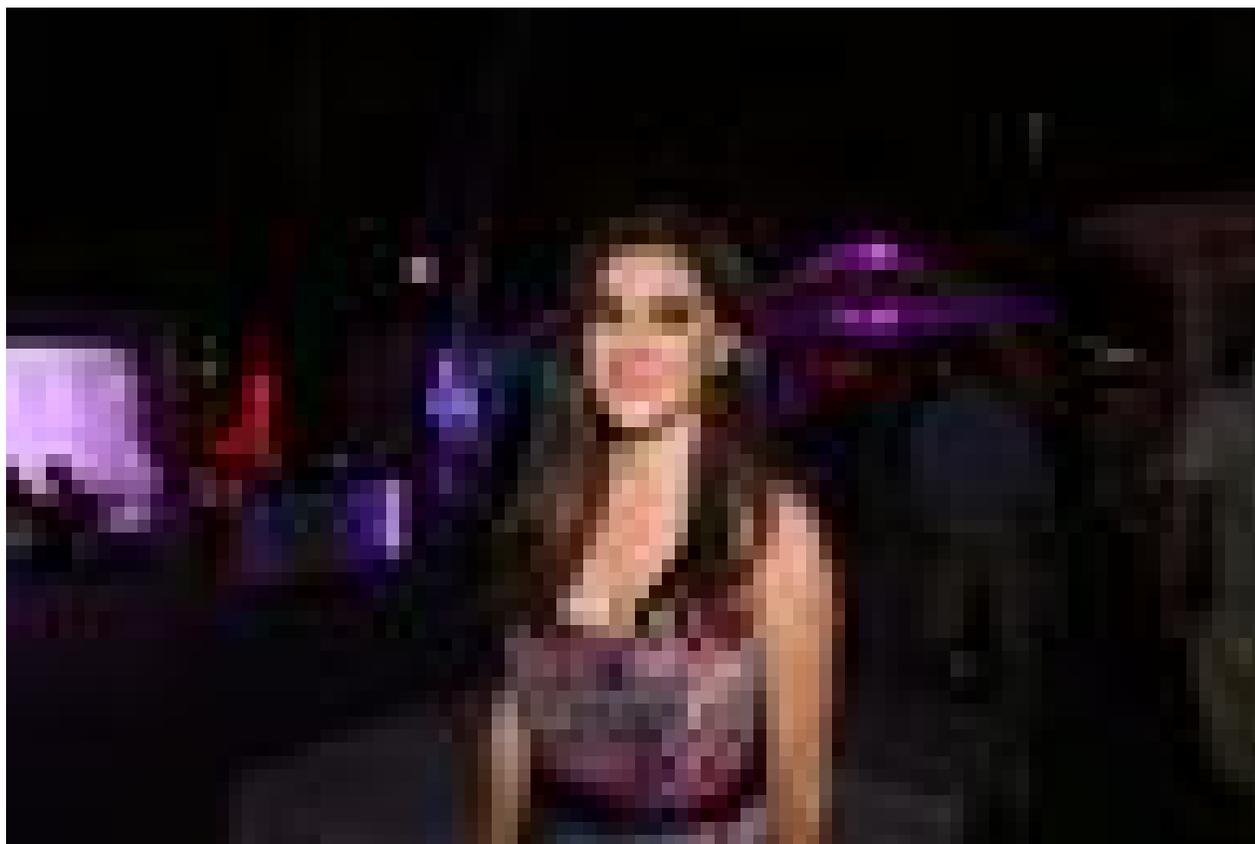


Robert Cavalli Resort Wear 2019 Collection COURTESY OF MIAMI FASHION WEEK

For the first time in its history, **Roberto Cavalli** unveiled a special curated luxury collection at the gala. The collection embodied a fresh perspective on glamour. Featuring 25 looks from the brand's collection, the Roberto Cavalli team donated an evening gown of the SS 2005 Roberto Cavalli Collection to the live auction. That evening the Ice Palace Film Studios saw a total of over 1,000 guests flowing in and out for four spectacular runway shows by **Daniella Battle**, **Carolina Estefan**, **Lina Cantillo** and **Custo Barcelona**. respectively. Fashion designer **Daniella Battle** showcased a feminine collection with tribal elements and pastel colors. Battle designs are inspired by a combination of textiles, colors and styles from different regions of Colombia. **Carolina Estefan** took the stage and showcased an exclusive collection with abstract patterns, silks and flowy silhouettes. Later that evening, **Lina Cantillo** showcased her 2019 resort wear collection, which focused on the revolution of silhouettes of the contemporary man. Her collection included European influences, which were tailored for the Latin man. I will report more on this collection in the weeks to come. **Custo Barcelona** closed the night with a theatrical flair filled with powerful, self-

assured women. The collection featured a range of fabrics from velvet, silks, knitted jacquard, shimmering nylon and lace.

“Every year we strive to set the bar higher and bring together the best designers and talent to Miami —this year is no exception,” said **Antonio Banderas**, honorary president of Miami Fashion Week. “We are very excited to be working with Roberto Cavalli’s team to bring 25 looks from his collection to our annual benefit gala.” Under the new Creative Director **Paul Surridge**, Roberto Cavalli’s collection embodies a modern design of beauty and sensuality with a fresh perspective on glamour. The brand includes an energetic wardrobe with powerful statements. “We are honored to be here in Miami as we have always felt very connected to this glamorous city,” said Gian Giacomo Ferraris, CEO of Roberto Cavalli Group. “To support the charity gala of Antonio Banderas for the [Nicklaus Children’s Hospital Foundation](#) and the [Fundación Lágrimas y Favores](#), we will be donating a unique evening gown of the SS 2005 Roberto Cavalli Collection to be auctioned during the evening.” All proceeds from the night will support [Nicklaus Children’s Hospital Foundation](#) and Antonio Banderas’ foundation, [Fundación Lágrimas y Favores](#).



I recently had the privilege to speak with MIAFW Creative Director, Lourdes Fernandez-Velasco about the importance of Miami Fashion Week, the importance of technology with respect to the content production strategy and how she is planning a growth strategy to reach a tremendous global scale.

Joseph DeAcetis: Why Miami Fashion Week?

Lourdes Fernandez-Velasco: Every important city in the world has their own fashion industry exhibit at some point during the year. Miami has become a worldwide reference in a lot of aspects, not only tourism and cruise ships, or art. Fashion is already becoming a key industry for Miami's ecosystem. Nonetheless, MIAMI FASHION WEEK has been in existence for 20 years. We, "The Fashion Shows, LLC," based in Florida, relaunched it in 2016 and have been working on positioning it at a world-class level. We are already getting closer... as Nielsen has identified MIAMI FASHION WEEK as the second most relevant fashion event in the nation.

JD: In your estimation, what will we be witnessing in the near future many more Latino designers and brands?

LFV: One of the virtues of this city is that it unifies both North and South America. It truly is a nerve center. Those who come in from Canada, Chicago, and New York for instance, come to escape from the cold winters, while Latin Americans visit this city and feel closer to home as this is a city with a Latin flavor in the United States. It's the best of both worlds. Generally speaking, Miami is an international oasis and will continue to grow its presence with global designers and fashion brands. It truly is a melting pot that has a unique commercial and entertainment offering that is unlike any other city, and touches many cultures.



Rene by RR COURTESY OF MIAMI FASHION WEEK

Miami International Airport already surpassed 40 million visitors a year ago.

JD: What is unique (comparative advantage) to Miami Fashion Week?

LVF: Miami is the cruise capital of the world and resort cruise collections originated in the USA in the 1980's, and the vast amount of tourists that visit Miami has always been attracted to this type of fashion. For us, it was organic and natural to have Miami be the only resort fashion week in America and truly be the platform for cruise collections. All over the world, resort collections have an increasingly vital economic impact on fashion brands and retailers. Miami Fashion Week's allure of runway shows and events compliments a global fashion voice that is very diverse. Fashion doesn't have to always be serious and having this take place in Miami, we feel strongly that this is also the most fun fashion week in the world to attend. Our designers already say so, and our production house not only produces fashion show but also concerts, a glitzy charity gala and several scene-and-be-seen events. We have visitors from all over the world that come to town to enjoy great fashion shows and afterparties, while at the same time, are also here for a quick getaway to relax and be on vacation.

JD: Talk to us about how technology plays an important role in Miami Fashion Week?

LVF: In any activity nowadays, technology plays an essential part, especially in something as avant-garde and social as fashion. Our content production strategy and growth in social media is also a key pillar of this newly renovated event. For instance, the SUMMIT conferences that can be viewed on our website (www.miamifashionweek.com), where you will see people who are CHANGING the world through fashion, using technology in many cases. We have integrated it very naturally and every year, we will implement new concepts.



Agatha-Ruiz-de-la-Prada COURTESY OF MIAMI FASHION WEEK.

JD: What were the highlights of the week with respect to fashion design and style?

LVF: Given it is an international platform, everything fits as long as the quality is met. We have had Colombia as a guest country this year with 5 designers, and also had designers from Mexico, Spain, Venezuela, and Miami to name a few. Additionally, for the first time ever the first class of graduate students of the MIAMI FASHION INSTITUTE also showed during Miami Fashion Week. To date, this combination is what makes it special and gives it a very attractive and very valuable diversity

JD: Where do you see Miami fashion week in the next five years?

Through the roof! We see very similar to the trajectory of Art Basel, but quicker. Generally speaking, the world is moving much faster than it was 10 years ago. As one of the strongest motivators, social media is not slowing down and has been a driving force for the fashion industry, as it generates inspiration, imagery, creative, artwork, and so much more. We have adopted and accepted that this a logical and important tool to Miami Fashion Week. Every day we see how content is being created, how compelling and visual it, and how by sharing it, reaches a tremendous global scale.

JD: What is your role (day to day activities) with respect to MIAFW? Our readers would like to know what you do and how you do it.

LVF: We would need a full page for that! :) I run the operation here in Miami year-round, which means that what the viewers and guests see during those 6 days it's a full year of hard work: sales, designers, and of course, we have members of the organization in Milan, London, Madrid and Barcelona.

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JD: Can you give me 3 adjectives and reasons that define MIAFW?

LVF: How about seven? Miami Fashion Week is **international**, **charitable**, **sustainable** (conscious about educating the masses), **vibrant** and takes its **quality** very serious. It's **different** and **innovative**. Who gets a taste, comes back... :)