

Three Over-the-Top Girlfriend Getaways

by [Matt Turner](#) | May 15, 2018 12:20pm



Faena Hotel Miami Beach's Premier Oceanfront Junior Suites have a spacious living area and a furnished balcony.

Summer is just around the corner, which means there's no better time for a girlfriend getaway. Trips wrapped around college friends, mom groups, work friends and mothers and daughters are all on the rise, according to Kendra Thornton, president and owner of [Royal Travel & Tours](#). However, planning for five to 10 individual folks — where everyone may have a different budget and idea of what they want to do — can be a challenge.

"In a group, it's always a bit of a compromise when making sure that everyone is happy," says Thornton. The destination, air travel and budget are all things that will need to be agreed upon by the group — most destinations will offer a variety of culture, lodging, experiences and dining, which will allow the group to pick and choose based on what they want to do. "Just be sure that the resort or destination that is being recommended fits whatever goals the group has outlined," Thornton says.

To help mitigate some of these challenges, *Luxury Travel Advisor* has found a domestic city stay, an island vacation and a resort in our neighbor down south for a variety of options.

The good news? If you nail the trip, you'll likely have the group coming back year after year to keep the tradition alive.

Miami immediately comes to mind when we think of a girlfriend getaway. While there are certainly plenty of options for a great vacay, few can compete with [Faena Hotel Miami Beach](#). Located within the Faena District — a six-block stretch of Collins Avenue — and decorated by film director Baz Luhrmann and his wife, Catherine Martin, Faena is lush with red velvet, leopard print, floral motifs and exotic detailing.

Despite the encapsulating interiors, outside is where you want to be. The hotel has its own stretch of beach, as well as a pool dotted with red and white loungers and sun umbrellas. Adjacent to the pool is the Sun Bar, which serves grilled artisanal sandwiches, fresh salads and crudo specialties. Good to know: Drinks and dishes can be ordered from the pool or the beach. Then head up to the Faena Bazaar Rooftop, a shopping center, "that promotes transcultural conversations and redefines the shopping experience," according to the hotel.

The top spot on the entire property might be the "Gone But Not Forgotten" by Damien Hirst — a 24-carat gilded skeleton of a woolly mammoth in a steel and glass vitrine, sitting in the hotel gardens. Top Tip: Make sure you have your phone or camera, as this is guaranteed a bunch of hits on Instagram.

With all the offerings at the hotel, you might not even find it necessary to leave. In addition to the beach and pool scene, guests also have access to seven dining venues, including two award-winning restaurants (Los Fuegos By Francis Mallmann and Pao by Paul Qui), a 3,000-square-foot Faena Theater and the Tierra Santa Healing House, a South American-inspired spa dedicated to holistic wellbeing.

There are 169 guestrooms and suites, with the hotel's namesake suite being one of the most impressive. The four-bedroom Faena Suite "celebrates the Golden Age of Miami glamour." It has two and a half baths, ocean views, furnished balconies, a full kitchen and a living room. If the Faena Suite isn't available — or for larger groups — consider the two-level Penthouse Suite, which has its own ocean views, floor-to-ceiling windows, spacious living spaces and dining rooms perfect for gatherings. Good to know: There are five bedrooms, each with its own furnished balcony, and ivory and beige with gold and black accented décor.

What we love: Each floor has its own Faena Butler who offers personalized service to guests throughout their stay. Guests also have access to an Experience Manager, who can assist in pre-arrival planning, departure arrangements and more.

For dining, Los Fuegos is Chef Mallmann's only outpost in the U.S. The Argentine grillmaster creates authentic dishes (think: roasted meats, fish and vegetables) in an open-fire kitchen. Pao, on the other hand, showcases Asian cuisine. We suggest ordering the Uni-corn, consisting of lobes of uni surrounded by grilled sweet corn pudding infused with an Asian citrus froth made of lobster and kalamansi.

Head back to either restaurant, the Sun Bar, Saxony Bar, La Cava or the Living Room at night to experience the lively Miami nightlife. Tip: The Saxony Bar, like the Faena Suite, evokes Miami's Golden Age; La Cava is a 22-seat private dining space set in the hotel's wine cellar; and the Living Room is a comfortable space where guests can enjoy live music nightly.

After a night out, head to the Tierra Santa Healing House. The 22,000-square-foot oceanfront spa has five multi-functional treatment rooms, two oceanfront treatment suites with outdoor terraces, two therapeutic rooms and one of the largest hammams available on the East Coast. Treatments meld ancient South American healing rituals, indigenous ingredients and the latest anti-aging technologies, including Shaman-developed body treatments, acupuncture, sound and color therapy, advanced enzyme therapies and advanced rejuvenating facials.

The signature treatment is the Tree of Life Vibrations. It begins by selecting a fragrant essential oil used for aromatherapy. As the body rests on a heated bed, a combination of Sacred Oils is poured on tension points along the spine. A hot stone massage is then applied to the body's symbolic "Tree of Life," starting at the lower back (the roots), along either side of the spine (the trunk), and the shoulders and neck (the branches). Sound enhances the therapeutic effect, while Nepalese singing bowls, handmade from seven different metals, are used to gently warm and soothe the lower back, slowly diffusing its vibrations to release deep-seated tension in the body. Tip: There is an option of extending the sound therapy to each of the main chakras.