

TRAVEL  for the Foodie

EAT AND BE MERRY



Empanadas from OLA Miami, one of a number of travel-worthy restaurants on South Florida's celeb- and style-conscious coast.

OLA MIAMI

By **SCOTT JOSEPH** || SENTINEL RESTAURANT CRITIC

One can find good restaurants in all corners of Florida, many worth a trip. But for die-hard foodies, some annual food and wine festivals make the trip all the more worthwhile.

SARASOTA/LONGBOAT KEY

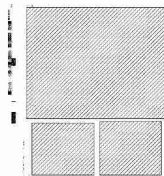
GASTRONOMY ALIVE, WELL ON GULF COAST

One of the oldest and more traditional festivals is the Florida Winefest & Auction in Sarasota, held the final weekend in April (floridawinefest.com). It features winemaker dinners, tastings and a grand brunch and auction. While in town you'll want to check out some of the fine restaurants in Sarasota and Longboat Key, including:

■ The Colony Restaurant, Colony Beach and Tennis Resort, 1620 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key; 941-383-5558. First-rate food with the Gulf lapping at the sand a few yards away. Try to schedule dinner just before sunset.

■ Harry's Continental Kitchens, 525 St. Judas Drive, Longboat Key; 941-383-0777. Casual and relaxed, Harry's is a charming restaurant with excellent fish dishes and an exceptional wine list.

■ Old Salty Dog, 1601 Ken Thompson Parkway. Sarasota, 941-388-4311. When you tire of fine wines, head to the Dog for fish and chips and cold beer — don't bother with anything else — served al fresco as boats pass by on their way to open water.



SOUTH BEACH, MIAMI BEACH

CELEBS COME OUT TO WINE, DINE IN SOBE

The South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Feb. 19-22, is a four-day extravaganza with more emphasis on celebrity chefs and other personalities in the hip and stylish arena that is uniquely SoBe (sobewineandfoodfest.com). And while you're in Miami Beach, be sure to check out these sure-bet restaurants:

■ Joe's Stone Crab, 227 Biscayne St., Miami Beach; 305-673-0365. A Miami Beach landmark that predates the latest South Beach renaissance — and the one before that.

■ Chef Allen's, 19088 N.E. 29th Ave., Aventura; 305-935-2900. Allen Susser was one of the founding members of Floribbean style cooking and his north Dade County restaurant is still a destination for South Florida food lovers.

■ OLA Miami, 425 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach; 305-695-9125. Douglas Rodriguez's Ocean Drive restaurant is stylish and inventive. Try one of the ceviches, a specialty, and the pork crackling. The Key lime pie is an interesting dessert.