

## Inter City Visit – Miami

### **Overview**

Geography and climate have been assets to Miami. When the freeze of 1894 destroyed citrus crops in northern Florida and Henry Flagler extended his Florida East Coast Railroad south, tourists followed farmers seeking warmth. Later, Miami's location would serve as a gateway to and from Latin America – both for immigrants, refugees and international businesses. Today, Miami is the largest metropolitan area in the Southeast and home to more than 150 ethnicities speaking more than 60 languages. "Miami today is a laboratory for the U.S. -- if not the Americas -- of a new kind of city in terms of international business and ethnicity," contends John Anderson, who serves as president of Miami's Beacon Council, an economic-development group. "Other large metropolitan areas will be dealing increasingly with the social and ethnic challenges we are dealing with today."

### **People, Geography, & Culture**

The City of Miami's population is around 441,000, but more than 6 million people live within the three counties that comprise the Miami Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Set along the Miami River between the Florida Everglades and the Atlantic Ocean, Miami boasts a tropical climate with rainy summers and dry winters allowing for outdoor activities year round. Visitors can take walking tours through the Art Deco District or check out a Miami Dolphins or Heat game. It is also home to a diverse Latin American and Caribbean population – 37 percent of residents are foreign born, giving Miami the nickname "The Capital of Latin America." Visitors can experience an eclectic mix of Latin American and Caribbean cultures from cuisine to arts to music.

### **Economy & Business Climate**

Miami is largely known for its tourism industry, but it is also home to a wide variety of industries such as commerce, finance, international business, television production, and real estate. Downtown Miami has the largest concentration of international banks in the U.S. The Miami MSA is also home to 13 Fortune 500 headquarters. Some of the companies headquartered in Miami include Citrix Systems, B/E Aerospace, Office Depot, ADT and Lennar..

### **Miami Port and Airport**

In the past two decades, The Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami has undergone vast redevelopment to remain as a global gateway for commerce and tourism. These expansions have helped the port to increase cargo and create thousands of jobs to better serve the international trade community. In 2014, the port handled 7.7 million tons of cargo, more than half of which was from other continents. As one of the largest cruise ship ports in the U.S., Miami is home to several leading cruise ship companies such as Celebrity Cruises, Carnival Cruise Lines, Oceania Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, and Seabourn Cruise Line.

Handling the most international freight and the second-highest number of international passengers in the U.S., Miami International Airport (MIA) is another key economic driver.

## **Transportation**

Besides having the largest transit system in Florida with a network of Metro movers, rails, buses, and a free trolley, Miami MSA is working on a high speed rail system called the Brightline that will connect passengers up the coast of Florida to Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and eventually Orlando.

## **Education**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) is the fourth largest school district in the U.S. and has received state and national recognition for exceptional increases in student achievement and graduation rates. In collaboration with the M-DCPS, the Foundation for New Education Initiatives helps feed, clothe, and shelter needy students and their families. They also support initiatives such as the Cultural Passport program, supplying students and classrooms with wireless devices.

## **Homelessness**

The Homeless Trust organizes and directs the Miami-Dade County Homeless Plan funded by a 1 percent food and beverage tax. The Homeless Trust was selected to participate in Zero: 2016, a national effort to end chronic and veteran homelessness. Involvement in this effort follows the Trust's successful participation in the 100,000 Homes Campaign and 25 Cities Initiative.

## **Partnerships**

Acting as a support system, the Miami business community works alongside the public sector to create innovative solutions to common problems facing the area. In 2013, IBM announced its Smarter Cities partnership with Miami-Dade County. Through the partnership, IBM deploys data analytics to reduce water costs, improve policing technology and increase transparency and transportation efficiency.

## **Did you know?**

- The city of Miami gets its name from one of the native tribes, the Mayaimi, that lived in the region in the 1600 and 1700s.
- Miami is the only major U.S. city to be founded by a woman, Julia Tuttle.
- Miami was a popular place for pirates to visit and bury their treasure. Famous pirates such as Gasparilla, Blackbeard and Lafitte were regular visitors and caches of gold, silver, and treasure have been uncovered on and off land in the Miami area.
- It has snowed only once in Miami's official meteorological history. Flurries were recorded on January 19, 1977.
- The first suntan lotion was invented by Miami Beach pharmacist, Benjamin Green, in 1944.
- Miami has more than 800 parks in total and is the only U.S. city surrounded by two national ones: Biscayne National Park and Everglades National Park.
- Forbes ranked Miami "America's Cleanest City", for its year-round good air quality, vast green spaces, clean drinking water, clean streets, and city-wide recycling programs.

## **Comparison**

The Miami MSA is the eighth largest in the United States. Its three counties include more than 6 million residents. By comparison, Charlotte's 10-county, 2.4 million population MSA is the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest in the United States. Both MSAs have diverse economies, with Charlotte showing larger concentrations of employment in finance and manufacturing while Miami has a larger health care and accommodations industry. Both areas have similarly high levels of educational attainment – 30.7% of Charlotte MSA residents 25 and older have bachelor's degrees or higher, compared with 29.5% of Miami MSA residents.

Miami's international influence sets it apart. Almost 40% of Miami MSA residents are foreign-born compared with 9.3% of the Charlotte MSA residents. Miami is also the 7<sup>th</sup> largest export market in the United States, exporting \$38 billion worth of total merchandise in 2014. Charlotte, the 24<sup>th</sup> largest export market in the United States, exported \$12.9 billion worth of total merchandise.