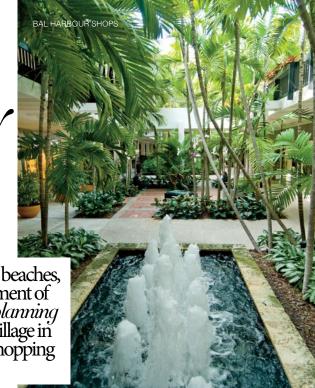


FRAVEL

Where luxury III

In the 1930s, *Bal Harbour* was best known for its superb beaches, private homes, and its elegant design—the accomplishment of *Harland Bartholomew & Associates, a leading urban planning* firm of the time. What was once only a charming little village in *Northern Miami* has become, over the years, a luxury shopping destination: the Bal Harbour Shops.





By Stéphane Le Duc

tanley Whitman, the creator of the Bal Harbour Shops, was a true visionary. He acquired the former WWII barracks, located between the Atlantic Ocean and the Biscayne Bay, to construct the luxury shopping centre. And, in 1965, he opened shop. The innovative space opens onto an interior courtyard overlooking palm trees, exotic flowers, and water basins. Even the parking spaces are discretely positioned under majestic trees. The growth of the development accelerated with the arrival of Neiman Marcus in 1971 and was quickly followed by Saks Fifth Avenue.

Today, it is the major luxury shopping destination for clients from Brazil, Mexico, Canada, and Europe.

The biggest names in fashion and fine jewelry are scrambling to secure their spot in the ever-growing development. Among others, we find The Webster—a true paradise for fashionistas. Under the watchful eye of its owner and buyer Laure Heriard Dubreuil, one can find the latest pieces of designer ready-to-wear fashion, shoes, and accessories. In yet another instance of her ingenuity, she recently inaugurated a luxury shop for men. The famous Italian brand Salvatore Ferragamo also just opened in Bal Harbour; it is the centre's first two-floor designer shop. It boasts 2,470 square metres in which one can discover Massimiliano Giornetti's

runway designs, including pieces exclusive to Bal Harbour Shops, such as crocodile skin shoes in amber or eggplant or the house's iconic Fiamma bag. Among big names like Armani, McQueen, and Balenciaga, emerges Gee Beauty a makeup and skincare studio originally from Toronto. In its immaculate white space, elegant shoppers can receive a facial, groom their eyebrows, or get a complete beauty makeover!

With that said, the centre's greatest quality is, arguably, its innovative and effective architecture, which gives way to a natural breeze that circulates through the structure. Bal Harbour Shops is also celebrated for its many restaurants including the astounding Carpaccio, which has been the go-to for Miami visitors including sports athletes, politicians, and celebrities. With such visitors comes an impressive array of luxury cars; rarely do we see this many Bentleys, Ferraris or Lamborginis gathered in one place. For Japanese cuisine lovers, Makato is a must; the chef, of the same name, reinvigorates the cuisine, moving far beyond the traditional sushi that one might expect.

The Bal Harbour village would be nothing without its magnificent hotels. Impossible to go unnoticed, the majestic Ritz-Carlton, with its 18 storeys, faces the ocean and the canal that unites the Biscayne Bay, as well as the magnificent boats that are frequently used to access the sea. Their 124 suites are elegant, sensible, and resolutely contemporary. For luxury lovers, the 850 square metre presidential suite has a 6-person shower with a breathtaking panoramic view. It also has 230 metres of white sand beach and a beach attendant service whose sole purpose is to ensure the happiness of their guests. Designed by famous Toronto duo Glenn Pushelberg and George Yabu, the St. Regis Hotel impresses with its extravagance and its modern look. In the entrance stands a silver sculpture in the shape of a cloud and huge

padded sofas that'll entrap you in their comfort. The corridor leading to the reception hall is decorated with bevelled mirrors, resembling a 21st century version of the Versailles Hall of Mirrors; there is no doubting that you have entered a palace. Whichever floor you are on and no matter which of the 243 rooms you are in, you'll be graced with a breathtaking ocean view. The Remède Spa—with 4,270 square metres of treatment spaces, baths, and resting rooms—is a luxury oasis. For those seeking the ultimate gastronomic experience, the St. Regis Hotel restaurant, creation of celebrated chef Jean-Georges, is your golden ticket. The J&G Grill offers a combination of famous dishes, like the "Crispy Egg Caviar on a Toasted Brioche with Vodka Crème Fraiche' or the "Black Truffle Pizza with Fontina Cheese," and innovative dishes, like the "Local Red Snapper with Nut and Seed Crust Sweet and Sour Jus"-all of which are executed to perfection. The headwaiter and sommelier have earned their spot in this landmark of the seaside resort. For those in search of a luxury destination and have yet to add Bal Harbour to their list, it's time!

www.balharbourshops.com

