

The evolution of Edgewater, a hidden gem

By Karen Elmir



Aria on the Bay in Edgewater offers luxury bayfront residences. Its development firm, Melo Group, from Argentina, has built a number of condo and apartment buildings in Edgewater and downtown Miami since 2001. Luxury developments like Aria on the Bay as well as Biscayne Beach Residences and Paraiso Bay are just some of the new residential projects rising in Edgewater, along with more commercial developments in the works. EMILY MICHOT *MIAMI HERALD FILE*

There is no denying Miami is on the rise. With a booming downtown, a bustling financial district in Brickell, and a beach that attracts visitors worldwide, now is the time to be in Miami. As the city continues to evolve and advance, lesser-known neighborhoods bordering the major districts are stepping forward, developing their own unique identities, and gaining international attention.

East Edgewater is one of those exciting new areas, emerging as a new hotspot for Miami's cultural, commercial, and residential development. Edgewater's loose borders are Northeast 17th Street to the south, Northeast 37th Street/I-195/the Julia Tuttle Causeway to the north, the Florida East Coast Railway to the west and Biscayne Bay to the east. The neighborhood has a unique bayfront position, dramatic views, and proximity to Miami's ultimate offerings in terms of arts, luxury shopping, high-end hotels, entertainment, and corporate offices. With a strong condominium market and more retail and residential

development in the pipeline, the area is experiencing a surge of growth and an influx of inhabitants.

Developments in East Edgewater are selling in record time as well, largely due to the central location and forward-thinking developers who built properties that fit the needs of young, active professionals inhabiting the neighborhood. Luxury developments like Biscayne Beach Residences, Paraiso Bay and Aria on the Bay are just some of the new residential projects rising in Edgewater, along with more commercial developments in the works. These projects elevate luxury in the area and offer an opportunity for investors and homebuyers alike to become one of the first in this newly-established hot spot.

Edgewater has also evolved into a desirable neighborhood for families. It offers beautiful parks, including Margaret Pace Park — a stunning area with multiple acres along Biscayne Bay (just off of Northeast 18th Street), equipped with a playground, running trails, open green space and a dog park. Miami-Dade County is also planning on investing more than \$60 million in the school district, much of which will benefit the Edgewater area.

Directly south of Edgewater, downtown Miami offers entertainment destinations such as the Pérez Art Museum Miami, Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science, the Adrienne Arsht Center and the stylish Brickell City Centre. The nearby Design District boasts high-end shopping brands such as Hermès, Prada, and Dior, while artistry comes from Midtown and Wynwood. Along with its proximity to these neighborhoods, Edgewater offers easy access to Miami Beach via the MacArthur Causeway and Julia Tuttle Causeway.

The ascension of downtown Miami has been well documented, with billions of dollars in new development over the past decade. According to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), there are currently 30 projects under construction in downtown Miami alone — including major developments transforming the Miami skyline, like the \$2.7B mixed-use PARAMOUNT Miami Worldcenter and Zaha Hadid's One Thousand Museum.

Since 2010, the population of downtown Miami has increased more than 30 percent. This steady growth has led to the increased popularity of neighborhoods like Edgewater and other bordering districts.

As South Florida continues to progress, I am confident that these emerging neighborhoods will have their times to shine in due course. In my opinion, Edgewater's "moment" is right now, and I am advising my investors and buyers to give it their strongest consideration — while it's still a (relatively!) hidden gem.