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W ELITE BEAT

BY THOMAS BARKER

FROM SWANKY SOIRES TO BACCHANALIAN FEASTS, SEASON IS FINALLY HERE!

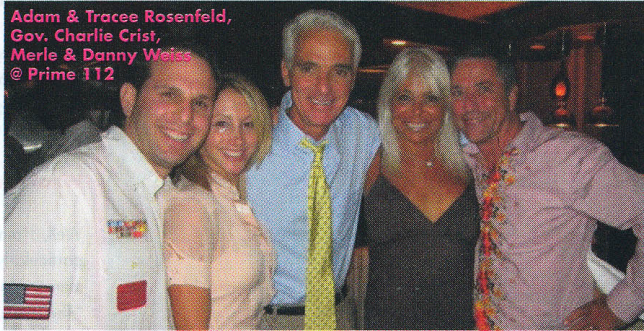
After months of sweltering heat, rainy days, and empty streets on **South Beach**, I sometimes begin to wonder what it would be like to call another place home. I mean, I could never really leave **SoBe**, but each summer seems to last longer than the last causing me to long for the days of fabu soirees and sexy out of towners. Luckily right before my head explodes with anticipation, **Season** arrives and I get my fix of social scenersters and glamorous shindigs. So after making numerous disappointing trips to the mailbox, I was happy to see invitations to store openings, restaurant launches, and fashion previews slowly begin to trickle in. It was only a matter of time before my social calendar was jam packed with event after event.

Now with all of these events ahead of me, I needed to prep and there is no better way than a nice day at the spa. After a summer of sun, sand, and humidity, there's definitely a need for a good body scrub, and from my recent experience, no one does that better than the people over at **Uhma Spa and Shop on 6th** between **Washington** and **Meridian**. Owners **Marco** and **Deborah Almeida** recently invited me to check out their new "Eco-chic Green Spa" for a little rejuvenation therapy before I hit the mean streets of the party scene.

When I arrived, I was greeted by a very soothing and warm environment. From the relaxing sounds of the forest to the effervescence of natural eucalyptus, the lobby and shop area of the spa was enough to get me in the mood for some spa activities. While I made my way around the room, perusing the various organic products offered at Uhma, Deborah filled me in on the different spa packages and products.

From massages to healing baths, Uhma seemed to offer every spa treatment you could possibly think of. What I found really interesting though is that all of their face and body treatments use only 100 percent natural, organic, and cruelty-free products. That is almost unheard of for a spa on South Beach especially a boutique luxury spa like Uhma. Anyhow, after a quick tour of the spa, Deborah

Adam & Tracee Rosenfeld,
Gov. Charlie Crist,
Merle & Danny Weiss
@ Prime 112



at **Prime One Twelve**. My friend **John Marazza** invited me to grab a bite with none other than the most infamous social duo on South Beach, **Merle and Danny Weiss**. Without a moment's hesitation, I gladly accepted the invitation and soon found myself sitting right smack in the middle of the restaurant with a super fab crowd of scenersters including **Tracee and Adam Rosenfeld**. As everyone eyed the menu, I took a moment to eye the room. From basketball superstars to international jet setters, the place was packed with a who's who of the rich and fabulous.

Seconds later, I was presented with a huge glass of cabernet and a delicious filet mignon served with macaroni and cheese. The food was so incredible; I couldn't focus on anything else but the scrumptious meal sitting in front of me. That was until I heard Merle scream the name Charlie in a loud New Yorker kind of way that only she can get away with. Before I knew it, **Governor Charlie Christ** was standing next to our table, chatting it up with the over-the-top socialite. It didn't take long till the rest of the room caught on and before you knew it, we had a mob scene on our hands. The entire room seemed to stop the moment Merle screamed his name. You have got to love that woman. I can't think of a better way to jump start Season than with an evening with Merle and the Governor.

Later that week, I was invited to the **Tenth Annual March of Dimes Chef and Wine Extravaganza** at the

A few days later, and I found myself back at the Intercontinental Hotel for the **11th Annual National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Recognition Dinner**. Not only is the dinner one of the largest social events of the Season, but it is also the largest GAY social event of the Season. Gay VIPs from all over **Florida** travel to Miami for this dinner and there was absolutely no way I was going to miss an evening with the gay elite of Miami. After arriving a bit late as usual, I was in no way shocked by the number of and caliber of people attending the event. From local politicians like **Matti Bower** to local scenersters like **Elaine Lancaster**, you couldn't have picked a more

diverse and fun crowd. As everyone nibbled on the delicious hors d'oeuvres and imbibed the premium cocktails, the energy of the party only got better and better. By the time the awards ceremony began, everyone was in high spirits. The highlight of the party was definitely the speeches by the award recipients. Both **Jerry Chasen** and **Leonard Pitts** gave really inspirational and moving speeches. Congratulations guys!

So now that I have a few parties under my belt this Season, I feel like my life is going back to normal and I beginning to fall in love with South Beach all over again. No matter how down I get, there's always Season to lift me up. See you at the bar!

THE SCENE

Speaking of wonderful social events, **Palace** will be hosting their anniversary party this Thursday night at 8 p.m. This party always gets out of control with crazy surprises, delicious boys, and incredible music. This year, **DJ Fernan-D-Cute** will be on hand dropping some really great beats, while revelers enjoy the open bar from 8 to 10 p.m. As usual, it's going to be one hell of an evening at Ocean Drive's only gay bar. Palace is located at 1200 Ocean Drive. For more information, call 305.531.7234.

This Saturday night, you'll want to head over to the rooftop of the **Townhouse Hotel** for **Scott Houser's** monthly rooftop soiree. Every month, hundreds of Miami Beach's most beautiful boys

