

Paints and cocktails mix in art studios

By **JOHNNY DIAZ**
Staff writer

Art and wine go hand in hand at some South Florida studios.

Spots like A Painting Fiesta Studio, which recently opened its newest location in Weston, offer parties where groups can get their paint on — with some Pinot on the side (or beer, depending on the taste).

Others that provide sessions for events like birthdays, bridal parties and team-building retreats include Vino Van Gogh in Delray Beach, Paints n' Cocktails in Plantation, and Painting with a Twist in Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

The studios don't provide the alcohol, though. It's bring-your-own-booze.

"You can relax, you hang out with friends, and you are doing something educational," said Max Marin, senior art director and co-founder of A Painting Fiesta Studio along with girlfriend Lesly Harden. "You are building and creating art."

At A Painting Fiesta, which also has studios in Coral Springs and North Miami, instructors choose a scene or subject — something like a martini glass, a view of Golden Gate Bridge, or Van Gogh's infamous "Starry Night." Then they guide students from a blank canvas to a completed work of art.

"No painting by numbers, or tracing involved, we are professionals willing to help you explore your creative side," Marin said.

Each session takes about two hours. Cost ranges from \$20 to \$35, depending on the size of the group and the day of the week. Painting supplies are included.

Kim McKinney, a Pembroke Pines physical therapist, recently had a painting-and-wine party at Marin's studio with 18 co-workers. They had wanted a "ladies' night out" and she thought the sessions would be fun and different.

"It wasn't about wine and cheese, it was more about getting a bunch of women together at one time and relaxing," said McKinney, whose group painted a palm tree at sunrise.

"We started with a blank canvas and [Harden] takes you through stroke by stroke to paint the picture," said McKinney, who had never painted before. "She made sure everyone was on the same page. She pretty much brought out the artist in everybody."

By the end of the night, McKinney and her colleagues had their own masterpieces to take home.

"When I brought my painting home, my children were pleasantly surprised," McKinney said. "They couldn't believe what I had done."

For more information, go to paintingfiesta.com, vinovangoghfl.com, paintsncocktails.com and paintingwithatwist.com.

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A PAINTING FIESTA STUDIO/COURTESY

A group shows off their works at A Painting Fiesta Studio in Coral Springs.



Art Deco Weekend

When: Jan. 17-19
Cost: Most events are free; some tours \$10-\$15
Info: artdecoweekend.com
Go to Ocean Drive in Miami Beach, between Fifth and 15th streets, and you'll find a street festival, an antique toy exhibit, a Cultural and Culinary Delights Tour and more. Musical acts include Allan Harris, Doug Wimbish, Suenalo and Sarah Jane & The Blue Notes.



Kiss Country Chili Cookoff

When: Jan. 26
Cost: \$48
Info: wkis.com/chili-2014
Bring your cowboys boots and best chili recipes to the Kiss Country Chili Cookoff at C.B. Smith Park, 900 N. Flamingo Road, Pembroke Pines.

Concert headliners include Rascal Flatts, Thomas Rhett, Brantley Gilbert, Joe Nichols and Cassadee Pope.

Delray Beach Garlic Fest

When: Feb. 7-9
Cost: Friday and Saturday \$10 before 6 p.m., \$20 after 6 p.m.; Sunday \$10 all day; free for age 10 and younger
Info: dbggarlicfest.com
"The best stinkin' party in town" is coming to Old School Square in Delray Beach. Participants can expect every kind of garlic dishes imaginable, including garlic-infused cookies, cheese and alcoholic drinks.



Riverwalk Blues and Music Festival

When: Feb. 14-16
Cost: \$10 Friday; \$25 Saturday; \$30 for weekend admission.
Info: riverwalkblues.com
Artists such as Johnny Sansone, Eric Lindell, Samantha Fish and Albert Castiglia will perform at the Riverwalk Blues and Music Festival at Esplanade Park, 401 SW Second St., Fort Lauderdale.

South Beach Wine and Food Festival

When: Feb. 20-23
Cost: \$20-\$1,500, depending on the event
Info: sobefest.com
This annual wine and food event on South Beach is a must for foodies. Among the highlights, you can mingle with big-name chefs such as Emeril Lagasse, Bobby Deen, Giada De Laurentiis and Rachael Ray.



Festival of the Arts Boca

When: March 6-15
Cost: Starts at \$25
Info: festivaloftheartsboca.org
The Festival of the Arts Boca — at Mizner Park Amphitheater and Cultural Arts Center — offers an array of classical music, jazz and dance performances, as well as author events. Highlights include Arturo Sandoval, Forte, Cirque de la Symphonie, Anna Deavere Smith and James Fallows.

St. Patrick's Parade and Festival

When: 11 a.m. March 8
Cost: Free
Info: ftlaudirishfest.com
Organizers are already gearing up for the ever-popular St. Patrick's Parade and Festival at Huizenga Plaza, 32 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale. Expected are the Budweiser Clydesdale horses, decorative floats, local pipe and drum corps, classic automobiles, bagpipers, marching bands, Irish dancers, street performers, scout troops, select team members from the Miami Dolphins, and elected officials.

FUN FESTS FOR 2014

Just because the holidays are over doesn't mean there aren't plenty of festive things to do. From country music to blues, from art to wine, the following events are your best bets for fun activities through the spring.

— Micaela Hood



Ultra Music Festival

When: March 28-30
Cost: \$399.95 for all three days
Info: ultramusicfestival.com
It's known as the electronica lover's dream. Yes, we're referring to the Ultra Music Festival at Bayfront Park, 301 N. Biscayne Blvd., Miami. Headliners include electronica DJs Tiesto, David Guetta and Afrojack, as well as artists Avicii and Krewella. Alternative singer M.I.A. and rapper Dizzee Rascal will also perform.



Tortuga Music Festival

When: April 12-13
Cost: Presale tickets sold out; two-day pass starts at \$165
Info: tortugamusicfestival.com
Headliners for the Tortuga Music Festival (set up on three stages on the sands north of the Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Beachfront Hotel, 1140 Seabreeze Blvd.) include Luke Bryan, Eric Church, Train, Sheryl Crow, Ziggy Marley, Slightly Stoopid and Billy Currington.

Instagrams of the Week

Tag your photos with #sunsentinel. We'll choose the best to showcase online and in this space next week.



View from above

Taken from the roof of the Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six hotel in Fort Lauderdale, Rob ten Rouwelaar was able to capture a unique perspective of the city. Rouwelaar, visiting from Nieuw-Vennep, Netherlands, took this image while road-tripping through Florida for five days.

Rob ten Rouwelaar, @rotero69



Neon beach

While spending time with family, Gerardo Navarra photographed this neon-lit sign on Fort Lauderdale beach. A resident of Ocean City, Md., Navarra spent his winter break visiting his sister who attends Nova Southeastern University.

Gerardo Navarra, @biggnavarra



Skyline at sunset

From a different perspective, Jennifer Johnson was also able to photograph the Fort Lauderdale skyline and the Intracoastal Waterway, this time at sunset. Johnson was visiting South Florida from Centreville, Va.

Jennifer Johnson, @tpfmariam9999