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Aventura Mall makes room for hospitality in expansion

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Rendering of Aventura Mall's east wing addition

By STAFF REPORTS

Miami's Aventura Mall is creating space for more than shopping with a 315,000-square-foot addition.

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Creating a social and cultural environment, the new three-floor wing will include areas for art installations and events in a design that intends to blend the indoors and outdoors. As malls struggle to attract foot traffic, developers are thinking beyond retail to differentiate themselves as a destination.

Retail and recreation

Architect Carlos Zapata is behind the renovation, scheduled to open later this year. The design includes transparent elements that bring the outside into the space, including a skylight running the length of the wing and an 84 foot by 50 foot glass wall at the entry.

Within the wing will be an open-air piazza featuring landscaping, contemporary art and eateries.

Through its Arts Aventura Mall, the shopping center houses an evolving collection of work. Building upon this idea in the new wing, the mall has commissioned a series of installations.

Carsten Hiller's Aventura Slide Tower sits at the carport, inviting guests to partake in a childhood pastime as they slide down the 93-foot-tall structure.



Rendering of Aventura Mall's renovation, featuring Carsten Hller's slide

Inside the piazza is a public work by the Haas Brothers. Titled *Gorillas in the Mist*, the piece features three bronze statues of monkeys situated amid bronzed trees, creating a tranquil environment through moving water.

Inside the wing, Mark Handforth's *Blackbird* references the shape of a clothing hanger, while *Veiled in a Dream* by Wendell Castle is a sculpture that also functions as a chair.

Off the wing's rooftop terrace is a 7,000-square-foot VIP lounge. Here, consumers can play pool, watch television, read or engage in activities.

This space, which includes a bar and conference rooms, will serve as a place for guests to socialize while also providing a place for private events.

"Our vision is to create a new gathering place where local residents and international guests can connect with an array of interactive experiences," said Jackie Soffer, co-chair and CEO of Turnberry Associates, owner and manager of Aventura Mall, in a statement. "The new wing is destined to become one of South Florida's most dynamic spaces."

Among the new tenants in Aventura's east wing is Kering-owned jeweler Pomellato.

Other malls have looked to be more than a retail setting with recent renovations.

Retail developer and operator Macerich is renovating the luxury wing of its Scottsdale Fashion Square shopping center in Arizona, responding to the Phoenix market's growing upscale appetite.

In the first phase of its remodeling and expansion, the luxury wing of the mall, anchored by Neiman Marcus, will be getting a new main entrance as well as new two-story shops and restaurants that complement the retailers. In a similar move to other developments, Macerich will also add other mixed-use features to boost mall traffic such as residences, office space and a hotel in future phases of its renovations ([see story](#)).