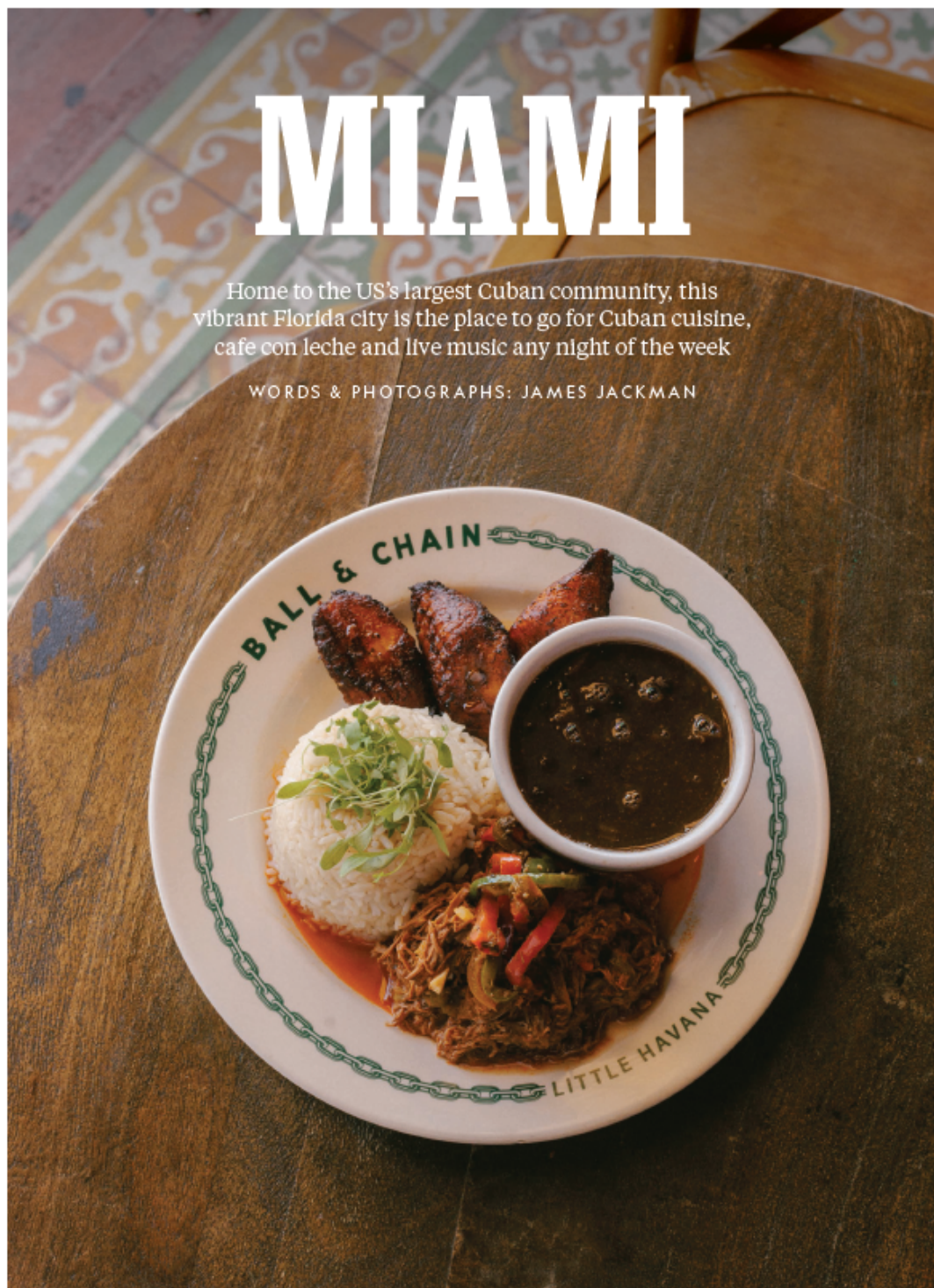


TRAVELLER

MIAMI

Home to the US's largest Cuban community, this vibrant Florida city is the place to go for Cuban cuisine, café con leche and live music any night of the week

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHS: JAMES JACKMAN





In Little Havana, Ball & Chain serves Cuban classics such as chicharrones (left) — fried pork rinds — and ropa vieja (previous page): shredded beef marinated in a sauce of tomatoes, peppers and onions. The Ball & Chain Trio (below) play at the restaurant throughout the week; Maraca-player Orestes isn't hired by the restaurant, but he comes in every day to play, dance and pose for photos. Over in the Coconut Grove neighbourhood, Chug's Diner dishes up duck croquetas with orange mustard, pickled onions and crackers (below left). South Beach's 'Deco Drive', meanwhile, offers a taste of the tropics with art deco architecture and coconut palms lining the street (top left).



The Cuban sandwich is arguably the community's most iconic dish. Believed by some to have originated in Florida, it usually features a filling of ham, roast pork, cheese, pickles and mustard. Cubatón sandwich shop's version (bottom left) makes for the perfect snack before or after a trip to nearby South Beach (top left), and you'll often find customers eating theirs outside in their swimwear. In the Wynwood neighbourhood, Enriqueta's Sandwich Shop draws a crowd for lunch with its specials such as arroz con pollo a la chorrera — soupy rice and chicken — with sweet plantains (left). Lucy Pla (below left) takes orders from the ventanita (little window).



Ventanitas are integral to Miami's Cuban coffee culture, with an array of venues serving their brews from these hatches out onto the street. La Ventanita at Versailles restaurant (above) is a Little Havana landmark, serving café con leche (above left) with as little or as much milk as you like. Several blocks east on Calle Ocho, members of the Cuban community gather to socialise over games of dominos at the aptly named Domino Park (left). The game has been played here for decades, and is usually a members-only affair, though spectators are welcome. ▣