



EVENT REPORT 11.04.08 11:04 AM

## Travels to Italy

*The University of Miami hosted its annual In the Garden Gala on Saturday to raise money for its Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center.*

Planners at [Eventures Special Event Productions](#) had a challenge on their hands when the scheduled venue for the University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center's annual In the Garden Gala—the newly renovated [Fontainebleau](#) in Miami Beach—was not going to be ready for the November 1 event. A new location needed to be found to accommodate a large turnout just a few weeks before the event. The [Miami Beach Convention Center](#) was the solution.

[Barton G.](#) transformed the grand ballroom and lobby of the center into a scene reminiscent of Venice, Italy. From the classically dressed masked performers greeting guests to the trellises weaved with greenery and the large gondola in the center of the bar—where Cantor Steven Haas entertained guests during the cocktail hour—Venetian style was abundant.

"Outside of the ballroom was a more traditional take on Venice, whereas inside, we gave it a modern interpretation, using spotlights of different hues to make the tables stand out," said Sean Gibbons, vice president of sales and marketing for Barton G.

A Venetian archway resembling the bridges on the Grand Canal flanked the entry into the converted ballroom. Inside, the entire space was drenched with royal blue, aqua, and green lighting. Tables were draped in aqua-colored satin linens with embroidered overlays, and topped with towering centerpieces of white calla lilies, roses, and cymbidium orchids—each in a different arrangement. In addition, four large screens set up in the corners of the room showed recognizable images of Venice, such as domino masks, gondolas, and canals, further evoking the sinking city for guests.

Waiters dressed as gondoliers served the three-course dinner prepared by [Centerplate](#)—the exclusive caterer for the convention center—beginning with blue-cheese cheesecake and spring salad with marinated sliced tomatoes, followed by traditional surf and turf, and finished with a decadent dessert trio.

The Caroline W. Halpern Award was presented to the president and C.O.O. of Macy's Florida for his dedicated support of the cancer center's research. Additionally, a luxury auction—with lots ranging from V.I.P. tickets to the 2008 Victoria's Secret fashion show at the Fontainebleau to a private cooking lesson with Food Network chef Ingrid Hoffman—took place throughout the evening to raise more money for the center.

Throughout the evening, the [Ruby Baker Orchestra](#) performed from the stage in the center of the dance floor.

—Dana A. Gruber



A luxury silent auction held throughout the evening raised additional money for the cancer center.

*BizBash*



A large gondola in the middle of the bar served as a stage for the orchestra during the cocktail hour.

*BizBash*



A Venetian archway resembling the bridges on the Grand Canal flanked the entryway into the converted ballroom.

*BizBash*



Trellises covered in greenery and flowers set the Venice-inspired scene as guests entered the convention center.

*BizBash*



Barton G. projected images of Venice on four oversize screens throughout the ballroom.

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Classically dressed models in domino masks greeted guests and posed on platforms throughout the lobby.

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Past the bar, a large seafood buffet of crab claws, shrimp cocktail, and a variety of dipping sauces was arranged on ice sculptures of gondolas created by Sculptured Ice Occasions.

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Centerpieces in the lobby were accented with domino masks.

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