

## Wendy Wax on *OCEAN BEACH*, South Beach and Miami...

Wendy, welcome. It's nice to have you here today to talk about your new book. My first question is about the setting. *OCEAN BEACH* takes us to Miami's South Beach. How did you choose South Beach?

*There are so many reasons—and I know I've already forgotten some of them. I started out compiling a list of places known for their historic architecture and that have a history of valuing and rescuing buildings and homes. Then I began focusing on those that I'd been to at least once. When I started reminiscing about Miami a light bulb went off. It*



*seemed perfect for Ocean Beach in so many ways, not just physically—South Beach is famed for its Art Deco heritage—but because it was a natural when it came to so many of the plot points I had in mind. (Not to mention that Avery, who I wanted to head up this renovation, has been in love with all things Art Deco since childhood.) I headed south and fell for both Miami and a house in South Beach that is a wonderful example of the Art Deco Streamline Moderne style. I knew the minute I saw it that Maddie, Avery and Nicole were going to love it, too.*



**Did you model the house in the book after the one you saw? Why is it called The Millicent?**

*I was definitely inspired by the house I saw, which, coincidentally, was just about to be renovated. But there are so many terrific examples of Art Deco and the later Streamline style, and enough buildings and homes designed by architect Henry Hohauser, whose work I especially admire, that The Millicent ended up being an aggregate of many design details that appealed to me. The Ocean Beach Photo Album I've posted on Facebook shares some of those—a "porthole" mirror, a fireplace, some of the damage. Oh, and I've credited my fictional house to Henry Hohauser, who remains my current architect crush.*

*The Millicent is owned by Max Golden. He and his late wife Millie (Millicent) are based upon the many famed comedy teams whose careers spanned Vaudeville, radio, nightclubs, television and film. They're a bit à la Burns and Allen—at least I think of them that way. When they bought the house in the forties, it was named in honor of the woman Max adored.*



**You mentioned reminiscing about Miami. When were you there?**

*I visited often as a child. It's where I swam in a salt water pool for the first time. I remember that once we stayed at the Fontainebleau. I was terribly impressed. We went to Wolfie's for breakfast and my dad used to bring bagels home to St. Pete Beach whenever his travels took him through Miami. My cousins had a well-known restaurant on Collins Avenue, just south of Wolfies. Later on my brother got married at the Diplomat Country Club in Miami. And I worked on my first feature film there, Night in Heaven.*



**Did you take your characters to any of these places?**



*No, but they did see plenty of South Beach. Nicole spots megastars Daniel Deranian (father to single parent Kyra's baby Dustin) and his wife Tonja Kay by the pool at The Delano while meeting the client she hopes will revitalize her high-end matchmaking career. Avery and Chase escape to The Clevelander Hotel. Nicole and Maddie breakfast at Big Pink. Maddie, Nicole and Avery crash Deranian's party at The Setai Hotel to "rescue" Kyra, but overdo the champagne instead. Everybody likes Ted's Hideaway, a small neighborhood bar next door to Big Pink, as well as the view of the jetty and Government Cut from the beach where Nicole, Avery, Maddie, Kyra and Deirdre go to speak frankly, away from the cameras filming their reality show Do Over. The show is supposed to be focused on the renovation of The Millicent, but last minute instructions from the network has it intruding into every aspect of their somewhat rocky lives.*

*Now that I think about it, they really get around.*



—continued—

**Maddie, Nicole and Avery first met in your novel Ten Beach Road. Do you need to have read that novel to enjoy Ocean Beach?**

*I don't think so. I worked hard to make sure Ocean Beach shared any of the back story pertinent to Do Over and the women's friendship and current circumstances, and I tried to do it without being intrusive. I'm looking forward to hearing what others think and, fingers-crossed, I've accomplished what I set out to do. At the same time, I'm really excited about those who have already read Ten Beach Road getting a chance to return to the characters' lives in Ocean Beach. So many people got in touch asking for more of Maddie, Nicole and Avery's story. So, here it is—and I hope they enjoy reading it as much as I loved writing it.*

**Where can we find out more about Ocean Beach, Ten Beach Road and what you're up to?**

*I've posted a lot of information on my web site, including excerpts of both books. My Facebook page has a second excerpt from Ocean Beach, plus photos showing research, inspiration and a look at Miami's past. Both sites list the dates and locations for appearances and signings—and I'm always happy to meet readers and talk books.*

*Please check it out at [www.facebook.com/AuthorWendyWax](http://www.facebook.com/AuthorWendyWax) and @Wendy\_Wax.*

**Thanks for joining us, Wendy.**

*Thanks for having me. I appreciate the chance to share news and tidbits about Ocean Beach. I really look forward to hearing from readers who want to get in touch to share their thoughts and opinions or to simply say hello. Happy summer!*

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OCEAN BEACH by Wendy Wax  
Berkley Books/Trade Paperback/Original/Fiction  
On Sale June 26, 2012/\$15.00 (\$16.00 Canada)  
0-425-24541-1 • 978-0-425-24541-5  
*Includes the Readers Guide*

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