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Emerge Miami's 100th Bike Ride to Celebrate Liberty City, Little Haiti, and Overtown

By Hannah Sentenac Thu., Oct. 9 2014 at 8:05 AM Categories: Culture, Cycling

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You really shouldn't need another excuse to pull your bike out of its rusty retirement, but if you do, **Emerge Miami's** got it. Miami's local cycling slash social activism crew has hosted a total of 99 rides, and for #100, they're joining forces with **Celebrate Diversity Miami** (CDM), a new initiative that aims to promote a stronger sense of connectivity between the diverse communities throughout our fair city.

The ride, kicking off on October 11, will leave from downtown's Government Center before cruising through key cultural spots in Overtown, Liberty City, and Little Haiti. The grand finale? A lovely waterfront picnic in **Museum Park**.

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Emerge Miami's been leading bike rides on the second Saturday of every month since 2007. They showcase stuff that's uniquely South Florida and help promote bike culture and community. For their 100th ride, they decided to pair up with CDM.

"Our 100th ride with Celebrate Diversity of Miami will visit neighborhoods we've traveled through before, with the added emphasis of recognizing the cultural and civic developments occurring over the past few years," says Adam Schachner of Emerge Miami.

And while this ride is a social-gathering-on-wheels, it's also a unique opportunity to bring some of Miami's lesser-known cultural landmarks to light. The lineup is such: first, Overtown's **Dorsey Park**, where URGENT, Inc. has been working on several mural projects documenting the neighborhood's history. Then, the MCI KaBoom Playground in Liberty City, where the Miami Children's Initiative has been working to break the cycle of poverty by investing in every child, block by block. Third, the **Little Haiti Cultural Center's** newly opened Caribbean Marketplace -- a venue for arts, crafts, culture and food. Lastly, Museum Park and the picnic.

"The greater Miami community is known for being home to a diverse population of individuals who represent a myriad of racial/ethnic backgrounds; however, too often our diverse community tends to live and work in silos, making it difficult to interact with one another in meaningful ways," says Naomi Ross of CDM. "While cultural differences exist, CDM presents an opportunity to challenge individuals to look beyond any negative perceptions that are perpetuated by outside sources such as the media, and find what makes Miami magical -- its richness of people and culture."



Courtesy of Emerge Miami

Dorsey Park murals

They expect over 100 riders, and in addition to the cultural component, participants will get to partake in a post-ride waterfront picnic, complete with KIND bars, some snacks and (most likely) a celebratory cake. Folks are welcome to bring stuff to share, too.

"Additionally, the picnic will coincide with the new farmers market at Museum Park, so we encourage our riders to bring a few extra bucks to support our local agriculture and artisans," Schachner adds.

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CDM will also lead a little post-excursion Q&A, asking attendees to reflect on the day's experience. They hope the ride will help bust common myths about these neighborhoods, and open Miamians' minds a bit.

"Whenever a news story about these neighborhoods is released, much of the commentary on social media is derogatory and overall very negative. It doesn't help that the general media tends to cover crime-ridden events, so people only have a one-sided, third-party source to base their perceptions off of," Ross says. "By offering events such as this ride, CDM hopes to shift the mindsets of greater Miami residents, and open them up to holding judgments about an entire neighborhood before truly getting to know the people that reside there."

As for the future, CDM is hoping to create a free, large-scale public exhibit that'll set up shop in Museum Park for two weeks in April 2015.

This ride looks like the start of something big.

"More often than not, when people go to these neighborhoods, they are just passing through, or maybe spend a few hours volunteering on a project in the area," says Ross. "This experience will allow riders to connect with the community on a deeper level."

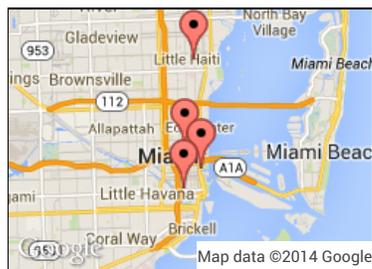
The ride will kick off at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 11 at the Government Center in Downtown Miami, 111 NW 1st St. The event is free, and everyone is welcome -- you've just gotta BYOB (bring your own bike). You can check out all the details on their Facebook invite.

Follow Hannah on Twitter @hannahgetshappy.

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Location Info



Stephen P. Clark Government Center
111 NW 1st St., Miami, FL
Category: General

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