



It's Winter in Paradise

And the party people don't need snow to make it so.

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February 22, 2009

In 1994, **Winter Party Festival** started as a one-off charity blowout benefiting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. Now, a decade and a half later, the yearly bash has become a massive weeklong frenzy of 10,000 international guests flash-mobbing 25 events split among Miami, the Beach, and Fort Lauderdale. And if you plan on missing it, plan on missing out on the action. The 2009 edition begins this Sunday with the LGBT Family Picnic at Topeekeegee Yugnee Park, Pavilion #8, from noon to 4 p.m. Running through March 2, the fest also features stuff such as sunrise yoga and spa days, before peaking with 6,000 dancers storming the sands of South Beach for the 16th annual Winter Party Beach Party. But the best thing is that two-thirds of all festival proceeds go to Miami-Dade charities, with the rest providing much-needed cash to national initiatives. So pay your way — from \$10 to \$500 — for fun times for a good cause. Visit winterparty.com for individual tickets, festival passes, and a full rundown of events.