

hip guide the hipset travels



CARMEN D'ALESSIO

KEITH SMITH

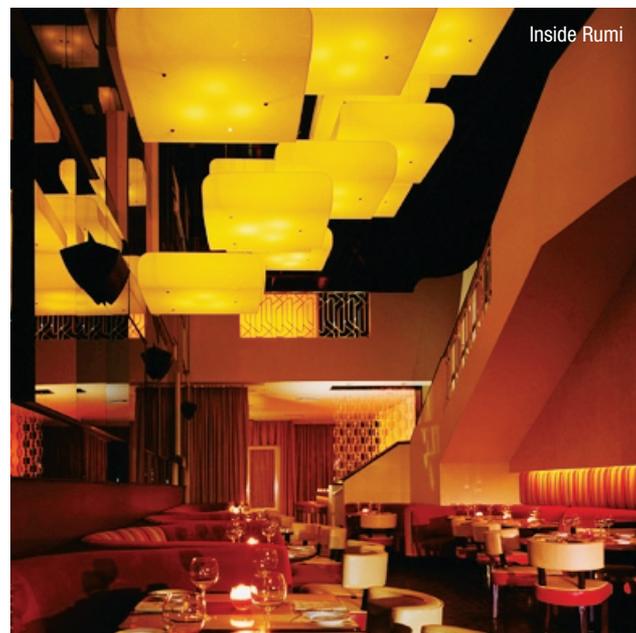
THE PHOTO EVERYONE REMEMBERS of Carmen D'Alessio is the one Quinto shot of her jumping out of her birthday cake at Studio 54. She was, indeed, the life of the party. But to see only the party girl would be to miss her depth: Peru-born Carmen is of a certain worldly breeding now rarely seen. We spoke about her travels in both French and English, just two of her five languages. In her New York apartment hang portraits by Francesco Scavullo, Bill King, Chris Alexander and artwork dedicated to her by Andy Warhol. Warhol dubbed Carmen "the Jet Set," because she began nightlife as we know it. It was Carmen behind all the parties and celebrities at Studio 54: She connected Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell to Manhattan. She introduced them to Joe Eula, who made the club's logo an icon. When Carmen casually talks of spending Christmas in Peru with her family, as she does every year, you would never imagine that this down-to-earth woman travels via private helicopter to Angra Dos Reis in Brazil. She's also hit Peru, St. Tropez, Sardinia, Ibiza and Brazil this year. A packing pro, she locates and places her **Dior Chris purse**, **logo sandals** and **sunglasses** in about a minute. Carmen never leaves home without her **religious charms**, **pareos**, **bikinis** and **Nokia 8860**. Next, she tosses in **music by Claude Challe**, the **Ibiza 2001 Summer Ministry of Sound CD** compilation, her **Sony Discman** and **tickets from CheapTickets.com** into her **Emanuel Ungaro shearling bag**, all the while raving about her new spot with Michael Ault (Chaos veteran)—the Pan-Asian lounge, Pangaea. (She's got plenty to talk about, having made it the hottest club in Manhattan in less than three weeks after she took it over.) When traveling alone, Carmen can enjoy the beach and yoga at her favorite places in the world—the Mandarin Oriental in Bangkok, the Shore Club in Miami, Recife in Brazil—in peace. She reveals that her best trip was just this summer, on a private boat with her British friends, having breakfast every morning on a new beach. If she can go anywhere for the weekend, she'll take Round Hill in Jamaica or St. Barths. "And bring **bikinis by Salinas**, **Blue Man** or **Rosa Cha**—the Brazilian designers are the best!"—Every month, *Syl Tang* spies into the weekend bags of the HipSet and captures the contents of their carry-ons. Reach her at syl@hipguide.com.

Haute Dish

Those who have been disappointed to see *Catch 22's* doors close will be pleasantly surprised when they swing open again in the first quarter of 2002. In its new incarnation, the swank restaurant will be a private dining club—a throwback to a time when wealth and luxury were things to be celebrated. The main dining room will continue its reputation of culinary excellence. And membership offers access to vintners select wines, many of which are limited for national distribution, at a modest premium over wholesale. Other membership highlights include: wine lockers, board/card room, association with local golf and country clubs, off-site gourmet catering, limousine service and armed security.

Carmen's restaurant at the Radisson Bridge resort boasts the best view in Boca Raton—and a whole new look after a \$1.5 million renovation. A New World menu created by Carmen's award winning Chef Gary Spitnale and an extensive wine list add to the impact.

Since opening in September, *Rumi* has become a major player on the South Beach scene—attracting the likes of J. Lo, Lenny Kravitz and Jon Bon Jovi. The décor resembles a 1930s steamliner, perhaps an unusual setting for Modern Florida Caribbean cuisine (we highly recommend the savory roulettes of pork)—but it works. *Rumi* is named for the mystic poet, and recitations of his verse are in constant play in the restrooms. At midnight, the whole place starts pulsating as it is converted into a nightclub.



Inside Rumi