

Groups quietly plan a loud November music month in Miami

BY ZACHARY S. FAGENSON

This November, lovers of live music may have the chance to buy a pass granting them free access, and even complimentary drinks, to live music venues across Miami for the entire month.

Though nothing's yet set in stone, that's one possible for-

mat for the inaugural Miami Music Month being organized by the Miami-Dade Office of Film and Entertainment, the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau and the countless bars and clubs that regularly play host to live acts.

And the Miami Music Festival, which debuted last year, has also agreed to move from

December to November to coincide with the month-long celebration.

"We already have tentative agreements with 20 different venues, and they run the gamut from Churchill's, Tobacco Road to Transit Lounge," said Rolando Aedo, senior vice president of marketing and tourism for the bureau.

And for venues interested in participating, "as long as they have three nights of live music, an amplification system and dedicated performance space we're hoping they'll become part of our live Miami music celebration," Mr. Aedo added.

The month will probably be modeled after the soon-to-start Miami Spice Month, which offers visitors and residents prix-fixe menus at some of Miami's hottest restaurants, or Miami Spa Month, which offers lower-than-usual spa packages at Miami hotels.

But "in terms of what it's going to offer we're still working out the details," Mr. Aedo

said. "Like Miami Spice it'll be a value-driven offer and we're brainstorming ideas.

"Probably in two to three weeks' time we will have refined a lot of the concepts," he added.

And the bureau will be investing in the effort, though he didn't say how much, with man hours, a dedicated website and marketing materials.

Meanwhile, the Miami Music Festival, along with moving to November, is looking to cast a wider net over Miami-Dade County, bringing venues in Little Havana, Coconut Grove and South Beach under its aegis while also putting on two daytime shows at the Bayfront Park Amphitheater.

The festival will kick off on a Friday with an artists' conference and continue with performances Friday and Saturday evening and daytime performances Saturday and Sunday.

"We're hoping to be a centerpiece activity but are only

one of many planned events for live music month," said festival founder Irwin Kornfeld. "We'll be featuring local musicians from around the state but also people coming in from Atlanta, Nashville, Los Angeles and New York City."

And while neither Mr. Kornfeld nor Miami Music Month's organizers expect to turn a huge profit on these events in their early years, they said one of their primary goals is to draw attention to the sometimes-ignored live music scene.

"There are a lot of great musicians that live in Florida. There are some good venues" in Miami, said film and entertainment office Director Jeff Peel. "People have their favorite band or they might have their favorite club... but they don't really go across town to some other place to see another kind of music, and what we really want to do is really broaden that prospective."