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## 5 Things You Didn't Know About Miami Vice

07 February 2013 | J. Philip Rathgen

*The American TV show Miami Vice set the tone for the eighties. Remember the cars, the boats, the fashions? Like cool duo Crockett and Tubbs, we've gone undercover to ferret out some interesting facts. Here's what we found.*



### **The Ferrari that Never Was**

This may come as a shock, but that black Ferrari Daytona convertible never saw the light of day in Maranello. It was a bluff from the start. The coachbuilders at McBurnie took the chassis and

engineering of a Chevrolet Corvette C3 and slipped a credible Daytona body over it. Ferrari was not pleased about the success of the fake Daytona Spider, fearing considerable damage to its image. Instead, Ferrari supplied the Miami Vice producers with two white Testarossas, on condition that the Daytona be scrapped. Hence in an episode titled 'When Irish Eyes Are Crying', we see the doomed lookalike blown up. But even the Testarossa was copied (based on a 1972 De Tomaso Pantera) and then used as a stunt car.

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### **Crooked Phil Collins**

Miami Vice was famous for the music. With 'In The Air Tonight', former Genesis lead singer Phil Collins hit the top of the charts. He was also given a chance to perform in front of the camera. In the episode 'Phil the Shill', the musician plays the fraudulent game show host Phil 'the Shill' Mayhem. Donning the flamboyant Florida look with gold shirt and matching tie, Collins joined the roll call of famous Miami Vice guest stars such as Julia Roberts and Bruce Willis.

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### **Miami Marina**

When not chasing drug barons in the Testarossa, Crockett and Tubbs took to the water in a sleek cigarette boat. Remember the opening credits and Jan Hammer's theme? And throughout the series, Sonny Crockett lived on a boat. For the pilot he made his home on a Cabo Rico 38 sailboat, to be replaced by an Endeavour 40 and later the 42 model. The speedboat was a Wellcraft 38 Scarab KV (why all the vessels were named 'The St. Vitus' Dance' remains a mystery). Ah yes, Elvis the alligator. Before becoming the best-paid actor in television history thanks to Crockett, Don Johnson had portrayed Elvis Presley in a TV drama.

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### **Fashion Statement**

Men in white. And those pastels. Also, never again (surely) will gentlemen be willing to push up their jacket sleeves for sartorial effect. At the time, however, Don Johnson became a symbol of 80s

fashion, including the three-day stubble. Originally wary of the Miami candy colours reminiscent of the landmark Art Deco district, Johnson had wanted to project a tough guy in cowboy boots. Producer Michael Mann convinced him otherwise and the look was born.

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### **Miami Sound Machine**

It wasn't just a star turn for Phil Collins. Other artists of the era featured in the show included Glenn Frey and Kate Bush. The throbbing soundtrack to Miami Vice stayed at number one for 12 weeks, making it the most successful in TV history. Jan Hammer, the creator of the theme, was congratulated by the great Henry Mancini, whose music from 'Peter Gunn' (1959) was the previous record holder.

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