

BUSINESS

Jamaica Bay Inn Opens in Marina del Rey

The hotel, which was formerly a Best Western, had been closed for 18 months for renovation and now includes Vu restaurant/bar overlooking Mother's Beach.

By **Paul Chavez** November 30, 2010

The **Jamaica Bay Inn** (<http://patch.com/L-qXkB>), a recently renovated 111-room boutique hotel, has opened for business in Marina del Rey along with a new restaurant/bar called Vu (pronounced "view") overlooking Mother's Beach.

The hotel, formerly a Best Western Inn, was closed in June 2009 for the 18-month renovation, said Lori Keller, vice president of marketing for privately owned Pacifica Hotel Company, which owns and manages the hotel.

The Jamaica Bay Inn had a soft opening Nov. 20 and the Vu will make its debut Wednesday, said Lissa Dye, Pacifica Hotel's corporate director of sales. A grand opening is planned for Jan. 11.

"We think it's going to be a unique lodging option for both business travelers and leisure travelers," Dye said.

Business travelers will make the most of the hotel's spacious rooms and high-speed Internet access, Dye said, and for leisure travelers ... her voice trailed off as she pointed out a hotel room window overlooking Mother's Beach.

The hotel's features include an inviting fireplace in its brightly painted lobby, a pool and jacuzzi, a meandering garden path leading to the beach and small meeting rooms for business or social gatherings. Each room has a balcony that either faces the water or provides city views.

The Vu is an indoor/outdoor restaurant and bar that will feature small gourmet plates, a selection of Pacific Coast wines and seasonal cocktails. Executive chef Kyle Schutte has worked under *Iron Chef* and *Top Chef* Richard Blais and was most recently executive chef at XO Restaurant in North Carolina.

"The Vu is really where we want to focus on having a big local offering," Dye said.

The Jamaica Bay Inn renovation was an eight-year process primarily because it had to jump through multiple government hurdles, including approvals by the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors and the California Coastal Commission, Keller said. The red tape, however, had a silver lining.

"It was actually a good time to shut a hotel down," Keller said. "That's when the downturn of the economy was happening and occupancy was down. It ended up being a good thing."

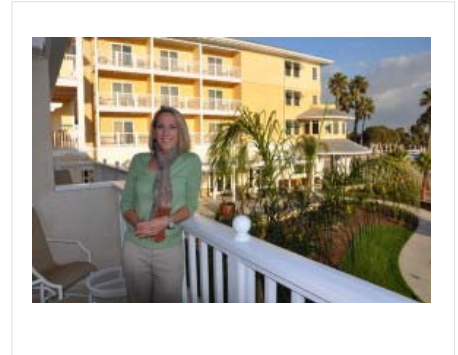
Hotel occupancy rates have shown improvement in 2010 compared with last year, Beverly Moore, executive director of the Marina del Rey Convention and Visitors Bureau, said in a Nov. 10 presentation to the Small Craft Harbor Commission.

The hotel occupancy rate in August 2010 was 86 percent, which brought the marina's average hotel occupancy rate from January to August to 77 percent, Moore said. The average hotel occupancy rate for the same period last year was only 68 percent.

Moore noted during the commission meeting that the hotel bed tax is an important revenue generator for the county. Hotels inside the marina have generated about \$28 million in room tax revenue for the county over the past five years, she said.

There are about 1,000 hotel rooms in the marina and the properties employ about 700 workers, Moore said.

In addition to the Jamaica Bay Inn, the Pacifica Hotel Company also operates the Inn at Venice Beach, the Holiday Inn Express, the Marina del Rey Hotel and the Marina International Hotel. The Santa Barbara-based company was formed in January 1993 to handle hotel operations for its parent company, Invest West Financial Corp.



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