

Online Exclusive! Jamaica Bay Inn - Marina Del Rey, California

Apr 12, 2011

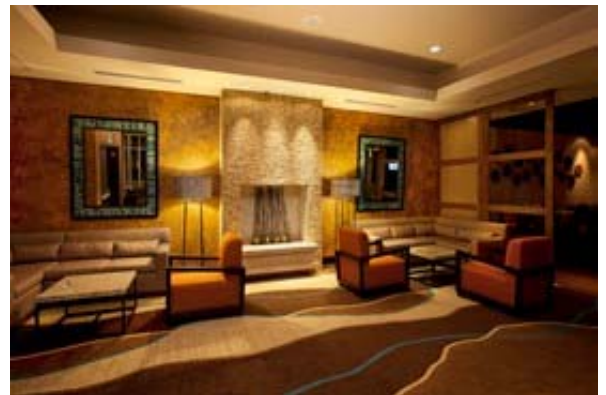
By Shelley Gabert



It may be on the Southern California coast, but the renovated **Jamaica Bay Inn** in Marina Del Rey channels the Caribbean with its West Indies Colonial style. "Being on the water's edge and near the marina gives a resort feel to the property that's now become a much more exotic boutique hotel," says Jonathan Watts, a principal in **Cunningham Group**, the locally based architectural firm responsible for renovating and expanding the existing 42-room run-down hotel, one of the Pacifica Hotel Company's properties that run from San Diego to San Francisco.

"Warm yellows, white painted woods, vertical picket railings, balconies, and a natural Dickie-style roof enhanced the Caribbean style and added a more resort feel to the hotel."

After gutting and refitting the original two-story 1950s structure, a new connecting building was added, which includes a new lobby, meeting space, guestrooms, and Vu Restaurant and Bar. In addition, an eye-catching entry was also designed to make a statement at the major intersection of Admiralty Way and Palawan Way. "A port-cochere featuring an octagonal deeply pitched roof was constructed and we moved the entry to the corner of the property where it really stands out," Watts says. "As you move through the lobby the property is revealed in layers with the outdoor patio, swimming pool, and colorful gardens on the most glamorous side of the hotel."





Chase Collaborative in Houston was responsible for the interior design of the hotel and ensuring that it complemented the Caribbean-influenced style as well as its Southern California location. "Being in California and next to the water we wanted to bring that atmosphere inside as well as create a cozy, intimate interior fitting for a small boutique hotel," explains Melena Chase, a principal in Chase Collaborative. "All the wallcoverings in the lobby had a red orange character to them and we used wood plank flooring for warmth and plush area rugs and a fireplace in this small scale space."

The 111 guestrooms have either Marina or city views and feature larger scale, more residential pieces, such as dressers with six drawers. An orange, heavy weight chenille throw, floral patterned pillows, and orange resin maps on the night tables provide pops of colors throughout. These design elements continue in three Executive Suites including the Rotunda Room above the cupola with dark plantation wood shutters and a long sofa that was made to run along the radius curve of the wall.



Below this room sits Vu (for view), the destination restaurant featuring upscale small plate dining. Accessed from a separate side entrance or through the lobby, the space, designed by **HFS Concepts 4** in Long Beach, California, definitely accentuates the benefits of its distinctive setting. "We wanted to bring the outdoor feeling inside and used orange and other colors of the sunset in the carpets, wall art along with woven textures, rattan, rich woods, and leather," says Brent Lynch, executive vice president of HFS Concepts 4. "The Jamaica Bay Inn has huge name recognition in the area so it's wonderful that it got redone in such style."



A carpeted lounge area with a fireplace gives way to a stained concrete floor in the restaurant, which is anchored by a large granite bar in the corner. According to HFS Concepts 4 creative director Susan Prann, modern

contemporary art, blue Caribbean accents, and weathered, horizontal shiplap planks were also used to add texture. In addition, light fixtures of hammered silvery metal resembled the steel drums of Jamaica

Vu features a wall of large windows that bring in the beach, but diners can also experience it on the trellis-covered outdoor dining area with firepits. Only a stone's throw away from Watts's office, he and his colleagues and clients dine in the restaurant and then sit outside and watch the sun set. As he says: "This project has been a lot of fun to work on because it's right in our backyard and it's got so much more of a presence in our local community and is also much more appealing to business travelers and families. It just goes to show what you can do with an older property with a little creativity."



Links referenced within this article

Jamaica Bay Inn

<http://www.jamaicabayinn.com>

Cunningham Group

<http://www.cunningham.com>

Chase Collaborative

<http://www.chasecollaborative.com/pages/home/>

HFS Concepts 4

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