



Beaches Welcome New Names and Fresh Styles

America's Only Beachfront Residence Inn and Family-Friendly Holiday Inn Now Open

(St. Pete/Clearwater, FL - February 14, 2009) – Visitors to St. Petersburg/Clearwater now have an even greater selection of distinctive hotels to choose from where they can park their sandals and catch a spectacular Gulf sunset.

One-of-a-Kind Residence Inn

The all-suite [Residence Inn by Marriott on Treasure Island](#) breaks the mold not only by being the chain's only beachfront location in the United States but also by its unique, upscale design that is a departure from the traditional style of the well-known brand.

"In many ways it's not like other Residence Inns," said Nasser Wehbe, regional director of operations for Ocean Properties, Ltd. Hotels & Resorts. "Because it's a beachfront property we designed it to be more fun for the vacation traveler, with an eclectic look that combines many different styles and incorporates contemporary, brighter colors."

The nine-story, 105-unit vacation hotel opened on Jan. 31, with studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom suites featuring marble appointed bathrooms, luxury bedding, flat-screen plasma TVs, floor-to-ceiling windows and private balconies offering spectacular views of the wide, sandy Treasure Island beach and shimmering Gulf. A beachfront heated pool and Jacuzzi, in-room WiFi, a fitness center, daily breakfast buffet and twice-weekly cocktail reception make for a relaxing vacation or business trip, and for an additional fee guests can have their fully-equipped kitchens stocked with groceries. And since this non-smoking newcomer also welcomes pets, the whole family can enjoy a beach getaway.

A New Holiday

Children can sleep off their fatigue from beach play in the bunk beds of the Kidsuites at the new [Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites on Clearwater Beach](#). With families in mind, the smoke-free property also offers in-room video games, a community game room and one of the largest pools on Clearwater Beach.

The famed chain has brought new life and name to a former independent hotel through a ground-up, \$27 million renovation. Initially stripped to its core, the hotel was rebuilt with 189 smoke-free hotel rooms and suites featuring 32" LCD high definition televisions, high-speed wireless internet and private balconies with magnificent waterfront views. Of

those, 116 are suites and also offer the comforts of home and more – fully equipped kitchens, separate living rooms, granite countertops and sofa beds.

The property, which officially opened as a Holiday Inn in November, also features Jimmy's Fish House, which specializes in fresh seafood, as well as grown-up hangouts like the Iguana Bar with Gulf views and live entertainment, and Rum Runners, the poolside tiki bar.

Swank meets Sand at Hilton

In addition to new hotel names, the area is benefiting from refreshing new looks at preexisting favorites. The 416-room [Hilton Clearwater Beach Resort](#), now nonsmoking, has undergone a massive makeover bringing sleek, upscale style to the property through the use of Danish Modern furniture, light neutral colors with bright accents and minimalist décor. The hotel's stylish presence in a prominent location facing Pier 60 at the entrance to the Clearwater Causeway announces to all visitors that Clearwater Beach has begun an exciting new era.

Welcomed Additions

After several years of hotel room losses due to condo conversions, local business leaders are thrilled with the new hotel names and upgrades.

"We're delighted to see these high-quality hoteliers offering extremely attractive accommodations that will bring visitors back time and again," said DT Minich, executive director of [Visit St. Pete/Clearwater](#).

"These properties are exactly the type of developments we need after the loss of hotel room inventory we've experienced in the past few years," he added.

Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater is the official destination marketing organization for Pinellas County.

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