



June 4, 2019

## **Media Release**

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Images available on request

### **What's New on Catalina Island**

The popular Southern California island destination of Catalina Island will greet the summer with new businesses, plans for new events and a host of additional changes.

"Catalina Island has been attracting vacationers for more than a century – and in that time it has always changed and evolved to meet visitors' needs," said Jim Luttjohann, the President & CEO of the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau. "The unique combination of nostalgia and innovation brings visitors back year after year to discover and rediscover this island paradise."

Below is a round-up of *What's New* along with media contacts. Changes include renovations both large and small, a new restaurant and a dynamic new base of operations for the Catalina Island Conservancy.

#### **Newly Opened:**

##### **Trailhead Center**

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Visitors to Catalina Island have a new destination to explore adventures in the island's wild interior. The newly opened **Trailhead Center** offers hiking permits, Conservancy Eco-tour sales, a retail store and much more. Conveniently located just steps from the island's passenger ferry terminal, the Trailhead is Catalina's first LEED-certified building and spotlights the work of the Catalina Island Conservancy, which protects nearly 90 percent of the island.

To start your adventure at the Trailhead, visit [CatalinaConservancy.org](http://CatalinaConservancy.org).

##### **Toyon Grill by Bluewater**

Bluewater media contact: Bob Ochsner  
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Catalina's newest restaurant is a dynamic partnership between the Catalina Island Conservancy and the restaurateurs behind Bluewater Avalon. **Toyon Grill by Bluewater** is open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner and offers sustainably caught fish, specialty coffees and unique island favorites. The casual space is located atop the Conservancy Trailhead Center and also features a spectacular view of Avalon Harbor and a full bar. Toyon Grill is available for special events.

For details and more information, visit [ToyonGrill.com](http://ToyonGrill.com)

### **Under New Ownership:**

#### **Catalina Island Inn**

Media contact: Nicole Hohenstein  
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Pacifica Host Hotels, owners of the Holiday Inn Resort Catalina Island, recently expanded their footprint on the island with the acquisition of the **Catalina Island Inn**. With 25 years of experience on Catalina, the company is looking forward continuing the inn's tradition of warm hospitality.

For reservations and more information visit [catalinaislandinn.com](http://catalinaislandinn.com) or call 310.510.1623.

#### **El Galleon**

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Located in the heart of the Avalon waterfront, **El Galleon** has been an island staple in the Catalina dining scene for 50 years. In May, the venerable establishment was sold to the partners behind Bluewater Avalon with investment from island entrepreneur Caleb Lins. The team plans an initial renovation with more extensive changes in the fall. While the menu will be streamlined, favorites such as ribs, steaks and prime rib will remain as will El Galleon's legendary nightly karaoke.

For reservations call 310.510.1188.

#### **Hermosa Hotel & Cottages**

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For nearly a century, Catalina's overnight visitors have been able to choose the **Hermosa Hotel & Cottages**. That tradition will continue with new owners McKinney Capital, a San Diego-based investment company. The new owners plan to renovate the historic property, including updating all the rooms as well as the lobby.

For reservations and more information visit [HermosaHotel.com](http://HermosaHotel.com) or call 310.510.1010.

### **Mi Casita Restaurant**

Media contact: Adilene Casillas  
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With its festive décor and Mexican food, **Mi Casita** is an island institution. New owners Juanita and Adilene Casillas plan to bring a new authenticity to the restaurant, adding dishes from their hometowns of Jalostotilan & Cañadas de Oregon, Jalisco, to the menu in the next few months. Plans also include a new emphasis on hospitality and Mexican culture.

For reservations, call 310.510.1772.

### **Businesses Opening Soon:**

There are several new businesses on the Catalina Island horizon, including seafood restaurant **NDMK** and new shops **Golden Bay Surf Shop**, **Catalina Pottery & Tile Co.** and **Rustic Lantern**.

### **New Events Announced:**

Catalina Island will be home to two new events: **Groove Island**, a techno dance party happening in the fall, and the **Otillo-California SwimRun 2020**, the North American debut of this popular European sporting event.

For information on events on Catalina Island, go to [CatalinaChamber.com/events](http://CatalinaChamber.com/events)

### **Renovations and Additions:**

Catalina businesses have invested in improving the visitor experience with a variety of renovations and expansions.

**3 Palms Arcade:** A full bar is now part of the fun at 3 Palms Arcade, which also features lunch and dinner along with the fun and games.

**Airport in the Sky:** A unique public-private partnership brought together the United States Marine Corps, the non-profit Catalina Conservancy and private donors to rebuild Catalina's airport.

**Hotel Atwater:** One of Catalina's largest hotels will reopen later this summer after a multi-million-dollar renovation.

**Catalina Express:** Catalina's most popular passenger ferry service recently renovated and improved the *Catalina Jet*, one of its fleet of vessels.

**CIVR/CIRE:** Catalina Vacation Rentals and Catalina Island Real Estate have a new office located at 212 Catalina Avenue.

**Island Threadz:** The popular apparel shop has undergone an extensive renovation that includes adding a new section for Cubs on Catalina gear.

**Joe's Rent-a-Boat:** This popular Catalina activity has added a retail shop to its Avalon Pleasure Pier location.

**Zane Grey Pueblo:** The hotel will reopen in a few months after an extensive renovation to expand and enhance the former home of the legendary Western novelist.

**2019 Pocket Map Released:**

The fully updated 2019 **Pocket Map** is the essential on-island tool for all visitors to Catalina Island. The map includes detailed information on where to go for hotels, vacation rentals, attractions, restaurants and tours. As part of overall Care For Catalina programs, expanded areas of content this year include information on water bottle filling stations and environmental best practices for visitors to the island. Produced by Mix Marketing, the map is available on-board Catalina Express and Catalina Flyer ferries and in mainland transportation terminals, Certified Brochure Racks, California Welcome Centers and all around Catalina Island including the Catalina Island Visitor Center.

To request a 2019 Pocket Map by mail call 310.510.1520 or email [info@catalinachamber.com](mailto:info@catalinachamber.com).

**New Staff Members at Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau:**

Laura Amezcua—Catalina Island Visitor Services: **Laura Amezcua** is the newest member of the Visitor Services staff. Laura is a graduate of Avalon School and a 2018 graduate of New Mexico Highlands University with a BA degree in Media Arts & Business Marketing. She can be reached at [lamezcua@catalinachamber.com](mailto:lamezcua@catalinachamber.com) or 310.510.1520.

Janet DeMyer--New Event Coordinator: **Janet DeMyer** joined the chamber team to oversee the 30 plus events put on each year by the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau. She has lived on the island since 2001 and has an extensive career and volunteer history here. She can be reached by email at [jdemyer@catalinachamber.com](mailto:jdemyer@catalinachamber.com) or 310.510.7635.

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*The mission of the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau is to attract visitors and advocate for commerce on Catalina Island. As the official Destination Marketing and Management Organization of Catalina Island, the nonprofit is governed by an elected board of directors and is funded in-part through the collection of Transient Occupancy Taxes paid by guests staying in area hotels and vacation rentals.*  
[CatalinaChamber.com](http://CatalinaChamber.com)