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## **COSTA MESA'S LUXURY HOTELS SPRUCE UP IN ANTICIPATION OF OPENING OF NEW CONCERT HALL**

*The O.C.'s cultural center is Southern California's ideal meeting headquarters*

COSTA MESA, Calif., March 14, 2006 – With the official opening of the 2000-seat Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and 500-seat Samueli Theatre set for this September, Costa Mesa's eight luxurious hotels have been investing millions of dollars in upgrades and renovations in anticipation of the attention this centerpiece of Orange County's cultural scene will bring to the community known as the *City of the Arts*.

For example, a partnership with sports giant Reebok to develop a fitness and wellness program for travelers called *WestinWORKOUT Powered by Reebok* has resulted in the recent opening of The Westin South Coast Plaza's \$750,000 fitness center. The center includes new custom-designed fitness rooms with LifeFitness and Precor strength and cardio equipment; cardio theater technology including flat screen TVs and individual viewing screens on cardio equipment; and digital music options.

Plans call for a junior ballroom tent on the pool deck to be completed in May. Additionally, the hotel is scheduled to start a major renovation of its lobby, lobby bar and all meeting spaces in June.

Both Marriott Costa Mesa and Ayres Hotel & Suites have undertaken extensive guestroom upgrades, including new carpeting, window coverings and soft goods. Adding to the warmth and comfort of their guestrooms, the Ayres have added new armoires, desks and bed lighting, plus leather sofas and desk chairs, and new bedside tables.

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Following a \$15.5 million renovation, Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa has become a meeting planner's dream with its remarkable seven-story, naturally lit atrium featuring towering palm trees. Recently converted to a 100 percent smoke-free property, the hotel is Costa Mesa's largest with 48,000 square feet of meeting space, 486 over-sized guestrooms and 12 suites. Plans call for a major exterior transformation, including paint and landscaping, to commence soon, along with the addition of a full-service Starbucks and a Sushi Bar.

The hotel's Bristol Palms California Bistro regularly receives praise from the restaurant press and Executive Chef Jan Pfeiffer was awarded "Chef of the Year" for 2004 and 2005 by Les Toques Blanches, a highly regarded society of chefs and other food, wine and beverage professionals. The hotel will soon be hosting live entertainment and offering great weekend packages starting on Saturday nights.

The Holiday Inn has successfully completed a multi-million-dollar renovation, with plush new over-sized guestrooms and more than 9,000-square-feet of meeting space. The hotel now extends complimentary high-speed Internet access in all guestrooms.

The Avenue Of The Arts Costa Mesa features 6,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, including the Grand Ballroom for events with 10 to 350 participants. Lakeside banquet and reception facilities are available, too. The owners of the Costa Mesa Conference & Visitor Bureau's newest member, the Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites, have transformed the property with upgrades inside and outside.

Additionally, the Patina Group has opened Park Privé, an excellent Costa Mesa event venue, and the Domaine Restaurant Group has opened a new banquet facility called Atelier, which is located adjacent to Troquet, the group's restaurant in South Coast Plaza, *The Ultimate Shopping Resort*™.

It all adds up to Costa Mesa becoming one of Southern California's leading meeting destinations. Nowhere else will planners find such an unbeatable combination of convenience, meeting space and services in an exciting, amenity-packed destination for meetings or events with from 10 to 1,350 participants.

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Collectively, Costa Mesa's eight luxury hotels offer more than 100,000 square feet of exceptional meeting space and over 2,000 guestrooms, plus world-class amenities like South Coast Plaza – all located just an hour away by car from Los Angeles, northern San Diego County and the Inland Empire, or an hour by air from Las Vegas, San Francisco or Phoenix.

When the meeting has concluded there are breathtaking sunsets, award-winning performing and visual arts, and Southern California's finest cuisine served in many award-winning restaurants, including the newest addition, Mastro's Steakhouse. Also close to Costa Mesa are miles of pristine beaches situated along the Pacific Ocean coastline, plus many championship-quality golf courses and tennis facilities.

“Meeting planners have found Costa Mesa to be an ideal venue for attendees whether they're driving the freeways or flying into John Wayne Airport,” said Tom Smalley, president of the bureau and general manager of the Avenue Of The Arts Costa Mesa. “We're in the center of everything.”

For individual resources on a hotel-by-hotel basis, planners may contact the sales departments at the Ayres Hotel & Suites (714.549.0300), Costa Mesa Marriott (714.957.1100), Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa (714.540.7000), Holiday Inn (714.557.3000), Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites (949.631.6000), Residence Inn by Marriott (714.241.8800), The Westin South Coast Plaza (714.540.2500), and the Avenue Of The Arts Costa Mesa (714.751.5100).

The Costa Mesa Conference & Visitor Bureau can assist meeting planners with everything from site selection to the promotion of their meetings or events. The bureau has recently completed a comprehensive new Visitors Guide, which is available in an electronic format so that hoteliers can easily attach sections to any request for proposals they are completing for new business prospects.

For more information, call 714.435.8530. The Group Sales Office may be reached at 714.840. 9500. View Costa Mesa's meeting capabilities and the Visitors Guide online at [www.costamesa-ca.com](http://www.costamesa-ca.com).

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