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2011 Tourism Predictions - Resorts

by RYA HOLLOWAY PHILLIPS on JANUARY 17, 2011 - 4 COMMENTS



This is the second article in a series that explores 2011 Tourism Predictions for Panama City Beach.

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We've checked in with the airport, and now it's time to turn our questioning minds to the resorts.

In an effort to snag an idea of early predictions for the 2011 season, we touched base for a little Q & A session, with Paul Wohlford, Vice President of Sales & Marketing for the Resort Collection of Panama City Beach.

The Resort Collection manages six Resorts and a 27-hole Championship Golf Course with over 1000 rental units, consisting of 1, 2, 3 & 4 bedrooms, all directly located on Panama City Beach.

Paul's insight was both informative and insightful, so we've taken a few excerpts to share with you.

On the early 2010 season:

"We were on a roll in 2010 when the oil spill happened. Had to go into crisis management for the summer and fall and ended up with a good year where before the oil spill we were tracking to have a very good year."

Thoughts on the ways they handled Crisis Mode during 2010:

"We decided when the spill happened to work hard to protect our customers hard earned rite of passage, their summer vacation, so we did with our oil free beaches guarantees, waived cancellation fees, etc"

Thoughts on current 2011 phase:

"Cautiously optimistic about 2011. Never saw an oil spill coming, so we need to be ready for anything. Need to get back some of the many customers that went to the east coast vs. coming to the gulf coast for their summer vacations"

How the Resorts are enticing travelers this year:

"To entice travelers we are offering discounted rates for early bookings and great values with upgrades, discounts, add on's, etc. We want families to reconnect and enjoy each other. Life moves so fast we want to be able to provide a relaxing, fun environment where memories are made. Our goal is to build lifelong customers by creating lifelong memories"

As of now, the Championship Golf Course, known for hosting a PGA Qualifying School, is set for it's regularly scheduled time in November.

The two Resorts offering large meeting facilities have solidified "a very good group business base for 2011" and in another positive response from Paul, he confirmed the "phone call volume into our reservation call center is ahead of last year, as are online bookings so that is good news."

For those of us living life outside the industry that Paul, and numerous others call home - this information can be taken as great news.

As a whole, we have focused an enormous amount of current attention on Spring Breakers, and understandably so, yet Paul's insight should be taken as reassurance to us all. Spring Break kids are wonderful, but kids will always be kids, and if there's a good party & proper PR - the kids will come. Families are trickier, with higher costs, expectations and less vacation time available to them.

Signs of families traveling for their holidays, is positive proof that our town hasn't lost it's appeal, or it's following.

What are you predictions for the 2011 tourism season? Break out that crystal ball and tell us what you see.

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Leslie January 17, 2011 at 10:45 am 1
I believe that we will see a nice increase over last year. The media has all but forgotten the oil spill. Not having constant misinformation thrown in our visitors' faces will work in our favor. The crisis is still real and much damage has been done but people will be back as long as they are not hearing incorrect information about oil on our beaches.

REPLY

Cathy January 18, 2011 at 1:31 pm 2
Thank goodness that the "oil" talk is about gone.... I was afraid it would go on forever! lol lol I actually don't know how anyone in their right mind could still be hearing incorrect information concerning PC Beaches. There are many cams they can tune into, condo owners they can call & even the write/call the Florida Tourist Center for this information. As I suggested in another article.... it would be wise for anyone planning a trip to PCB this summer to plan early, book your condo and hope for the best weather! That's about all we can do really as none of us have a "crystal ball" or if we did probably wouldn't know how or what to do with it! hahahaaa I believe it will be a great Spring/Summer & Fall to vacation in Panama City! Thanks, Cathy/Tennessee

REPLY

Hugh January 18, 2011 at 2:57 pm 3
As an owner my bookings are up quite a bit this year over the past 3. It is encouraging but I'll see what gets in the bank.

REPLY

Vera January 19, 2011 at 11:01 am 4
I know it is going to be great year. Panama City Beach has it all: Luxury Resorts with Gulf View, Great Attractions for all ages and Amazing Dinning opportunities. It is very affordable even during pick time. Southwest and Delta Airlines are doing great job on fares and flights.

REPLY

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