

DESTINATION SUNSHINE — A WINTER ESCAPE

BY LEONARD FINKEL

With the cold, dark days of winter upon us, if you're like me, you're looking for a great winter escape. Just a hop, skip and jump from Long Island is the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort. This truly distinctive, Gold Tee Award winning property has collected numerous accolades for outstanding achievement including the Corporate and Incentive Travel Award of Excellence, AAA Four Diamond and Marriott International's ACE Award, bestowed for culinary excellence. When it comes to service, you'll think you're at the Ritz-Carlton. From the moment you set foot on property, friendly faces welcome you at every turn, including employees whose sole job description is to greet and assist guests upon entry. A flight from hell delayed my arrival until after 2 a.m. in the morning. Even at that

late hour, a request for non-allergic pillows was filled within minutes. A tribute to the success of the property is testimony from high profile guests like KPMG Principal Bruce J. Adler who said, "I travel throughout the year, and nowhere do I experience the level of service and personal attention that you and your staff provide."

Located on 200 tropical acres just minutes from area attractions, the Orlando World Center Marriott boasts 2000 guest rooms and suites. The largest Marriott in the world, the World Center Resort is one of only three properties in the Orlando area with on-site championship golf. After undergoing a \$130 million renovation, the richly appointed redesign meticulously incorporates fine linens, fabrics, accessories and artwork in a motif reminiscent of Florida's early Spanish influence. All suites and guestrooms now offer high-speed Internet access and a host of uncommon amenities including the comfort of down-surround pillows and comforters.

Avid and recreational golfers will enjoy playing the completely re-designed Hawk's Landing golf course, located within footsteps of the new atrium lobby. Winding through lushly landscaped terrain, Hawk's Landing offers a thoroughly enjoyable and energizing golf experience. The course was recently re-sculpted not only by the dictates of Mother Nature but more significantly, by the talents of a nurturing team of dedicated golf aficionados. Following a re-design by Robert E. Cupp of the Joe Lee layout, the new Hawk's Landing provides challenges for golfers of all levels. The enhancements and natural details of the upgraded course are impressive: aquatic vegetation, tailored tee boxes, native grasses, multifarious trees (Chinese tallow, palms, oak and pine), manicured fairways and water everywhere. At 6,810 yards from the championship tees, this par-72 golf course features water in play on 15 holes. Large

Tifdwarf Bermuda grass greens compliment gently undulating fairways. This course demands strategy and accuracy, particularly when playing from the tips. Another simple touch, you can walk the golf course. The adjoining pro shop, already rated among the top 100 in the nation, and newly constructed Hawk's Landing Steakhouse & Grille only enhance the golf experience.

The management team here was willing to go far beyond typical hotel standards when it came to its dining options. No chains or dreary hotel food here. Ten restaurants and lounges provide enticing options. For families, an upscale food court with indoor or outdoor seating fits bill. At the Mikado Japanese Steakhouse, a delicious dining experience is richly enhanced by flashy tableside preparation.

Hawk's Landing Steakhouse & Grille features tender, succulent steaks, the in freshest local seafood and a wine list that won a Wine Spectator Award on its first try. The chefs at Ristorante Tuscany were actually trained in Tuscany, Italy. In addition to the freshest in local foods, many ingredients are imported directly from the old country. Solaris features a lavish breakfast buffet and a Starbucks located just off the lobby provides addicts a fix.

Showcasing the latest in advanced European treatments, traditional Asian therapies and a multitude of varied massage techniques, the refurbished spa provides a haven for rejuvenation. The spa has more ways to make a body feel wonderful all over than you'll have days to enjoy them. The adjoining 4,000 square-foot Fitness Center features a vast cardio theater including free weights, 21 cardiovascular stations, and a wide range of stationary muscular training machines. More paradise then pool, a 600,000 gallon lagoon-shaped oasis is the centerpiece to six pools and five hot tubs. Soothing waterfalls, thrilling slides amid the tropical poolside setting is a primary reason many guests keep coming back.

Tired of the cold? Want to get away? For additional information or reservations dial 800-621-0638 or visit www.marriottworldcenter.com.

