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## **Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Opens; New Restaurants, Shopping Bring Excitement and Glitz to the International Drive Resort Area**

In the International Drive Resort Area visitors discover an endless list of leisure activities. New attractions at the major theme parks, expanded accommodations, new dining, shopping and family entertainment give guests a reason to visit I-Drive again and again. And this is only beginning of the current that will mean more choices than ever for visitors to the area. Upcoming events and a sampling of the exciting plans include:

### **Coming Soon!**

Opening on September 9, **Rosen Shingle Creek Resort** features 1,500 guest rooms including 139 suites and 445,000 square feet of dedicated, state-of-the-art meeting space that will include a 95,000-square-foot column-free ballroom. The resort offers a full-service, 13,000-square-foot spa with nine treatment rooms, a state-of-the-art health club, three outdoor swimming pools, an 18-hole (72 par) championship golf course, two lighted tennis courts, seasonal canoe trips, nature trails, fishing, a rock climbing wall, a volleyball court and more. At the heart of International Drive area, and adjacent to the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, the property is only ½ mile from the Convention Center and less than 10 minutes from Universal Studios. The resort occupies a 230-acre site along Shingle Creek, the headwaters of the Florida Everglades. The Shingle Creek Golf Club has been open for one year. [www.rosenshinglecreek.com](http://www.rosenshinglecreek.com).

**Prime Outlets Orlando** is undergoing a \$150 million extreme makeover that will change the shopping center to an outdoor shopping experience and create new stores and restaurants. As many as 80 new stores are expected to be included in the expansion. The project is expected to take up to 24 months to complete. Prime Outlets is Orlando's largest outlet center.

### **I-Drive Is Putting on the Glitz!**

It appears that a bit of the glitz typically found in Las Vegas is headed to the International Drive Resort Area over the next several years. Incredible growth is planned with new mega resorts, attraction expansions, restaurants and entertainment that will change the landscape and the skyline.

If location is everything, then I-Drive is the place to be and will continue to be the center of the tourism and meeting universe.

With the recent opening of the upscale **Capital Grille at Pointe Orlando** and the opening of **Rosen's Shingle Creek**, the bar is being raised to very high levels and much more is coming, according to Luann Brooks, executive director of the International Drive Master Transit and Improvement District.

"The overwhelming number of exciting new properties that are planned, demonstrates the demand for upscale rooms that has come about since the opening of the Orange County Convention Center's 2003 expansion," Brooks says.

"New and enhanced attractions, mega resorts, upscale dining and shopping, will all bring an exciting new look and energy to the International Drive area as we enter a new phase of development. Both tourists, meeting planners and convention attendees will have new and upscale properties and meeting facilities that will guarantee that they return again and again."

Brooks says that as part of keeping its audiences informed, the District has developed a new on-line vacation planning site and extensive editorial content at [www.InternationalDriveOrlando.com](http://www.InternationalDriveOrlando.com).

**The Pointe Orlando** is currently undergoing a major redevelopment that includes new restaurants, a new plaza and signature entranceway, as well as the addition of retail and entertainment concepts, many new to the marketplace. Pointe Orlando remains open throughout the redevelopment process with over 40 restaurants and stores including Muvico Pointe 21 Theaters, WonderWorks, A/X Armani Exchange, Starbucks, Victoria's Secret, FootLocker, Bath & Body Works, Hooters, Express, Chico's, B. Dalton's, Johnny Rockets, Spencers, Adobe Gila's, Everything But Water and more.

Additional physical changes to the property will include new storefronts, lighting and landscape as well as seating and signage. Pointe Orlando is open Monday thru Saturday 10am to 10pm and on Sunday from 11am to 9pm. For more information call 407.248-2838 or visit [www.pointeorlando.com](http://www.pointeorlando.com). New and upcoming:

- The Capital Grille (opened March 27, 2006) in 9,000 square feet including three private rooms, a chef's table and an outdoor terrace. The award winning menu features dry-aged steak and fresh seafood in upscale, plush surroundings. The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner.

Scheduled for late 2006 opening...

- Maggiano's Little Italy joins Pointe Orlando in 16,000 square feet. Maggiano's will feature authentic Italian fare in a relaxed setting. Guests will enjoy a home-cooked meal featuring either family-style or single-serving meals. Private rooms will be available for group functions.

- Tommy Bahama's Tropical Café & Emporium will feature a full-service restaurant with a relaxed island theme as well as men's and women's clothing, accessories and home furnishings. One of only six in the country, this 10,000 square foot venue will feature the laid-back state of mind that is the Tommy Bahama philosophy.
- B.B. King's will be located on the second level of Pointe Orlando in 10,000 square feet. The venue will feature nightly entertainment including local, regional and national acts along with a full service bar and restaurant. B.B. King's will also be available for private events.
- The Grape will be located in 3,000 square feet overlooking a newly formed courtyard. The Grape is an upscale wine concept that combines a wine bar and retail seller under one roof offering more than 120 wines. In addition, a full menu of small-plate gourmet fare designed to complement the wine list is available
- Scheduled for early 2007 opening...
- The Oceanaire will feature fresh seafood flown in daily from around the world and served in a well appointed setting. The daily printed menu is a testament to the quality of seafood that emphasizes seasonal preparations and regionally inspired dishes. The restaurant will be located in 8,500 square feet and the first in Central Florida
- Taverna Opa will feature authentic Greek cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere. Located in 5,600 square feet on the second level of Pointe Orlando, the restaurant will be the fifth location in Florida. Known for its festive surroundings, Taverna Opa will offer entertainment such as belly dancing and Greek music on the weekends. The restaurant will have a private room for parties and meetings and will offer menu options from a la carte to family-style service.

### **New and Coming Attractions**

The newest show at **SeaWorld Orlando**, Blue Horizons, features majestic marine animals, exotic birds and elaborately costumed performers in a Broadway-style performance. Coming this spring... SeaWorld unveils another new show, "Believe". The show will features SeaWorld's majestic killer whales with spectacular choreography, an elaborate 3-story set, original musical score and panoramic screens. [www.seaworld.com](http://www.seaworld.com).

**Universal Studios Florida** provides the chance for visitors to mingle with creepy crawly critters and face terrifying obstacles in the park's new "Fear Factor Live" show. [www.universalorlando.com](http://www.universalorlando.com).

**Magical Midway on International Drive** introduces a new tower thrill ride known as the StarFlyer. The only tower ride of its kind in the United States, this almost \$2 million

dollar unique attraction stands 256 feet tall and illuminates in the evening. Visitors board the StarFlyer on an 18-foot high platform and are seated in a chair like swing. The ride accommodates 18 passengers with 6 single seats and 6 double seats. The chair seats are attached vertically by chains to the star shaped center car, which revolves up the tower on its own axis making the seats fly through the air at 54mph reaching heights of over 230 feet. The StarFlyer provides visitors a phenomenal view of Orlando and exhilarating experience for the entire family. [www.magicalmidway.com](http://www.magicalmidway.com).

**Ron Jon Surfpark at Festival Bay Mall** on International Drive plans to open in late 2006 with a planned \$10 million, 100,000-square-foot surf park. Features include three wave pools, including a football field-sized, 1.5 million-gallon salt water surfing lagoon, featuring up to six waves per minute and ride lengths of 60-100 yards. A Ron Jon restaurant, corporate poolside suites and function space for up to 1,000 guests are also planned. A professionally staffed surf school offering group and private lessons to all age groups and skill levels is also part of the planned project. [www.ronjons.com](http://www.ronjons.com).

### **Additions, renovations and more!**

**The Portofino Bay Hotel** at Universal Orlando, completed a \$5.5 million renovation on its 750 rooms and suites. The renovations include new bedding, pillows, curtains and upholstery, new artwork and lamps, new carpeting in guest rooms and corridors, as well as the addition of in-room amenities. [www.portofinbayhotel.com](http://www.portofinbayhotel.com).

The Superior Group LLC has purchased the 101-room **Crowne Plaza Resort Orlando** on International Drive and plans to add a 700-unit condominium project to the resort's inventory. [www.crownplazaorlando.com](http://www.crownplazaorlando.com).

**The Renaissance Orlando Resort at SeaWorld** plans a \$20 million makeover in 2006. Plans include complete refurbishment of the Crystal and Coral ballrooms and upgraded bedding in the guest rooms. The hotel also plans to open a full-service spa in 2007. [www.renaissancehotels.com](http://www.renaissancehotels.com).

**SageResort**, a new high-rise condominium hotel is the latest in a growing list of properties planned for the International Drive area surrounding the Orange County Convention Center. Grand opening is slated for June 2007. The 260-unit, 10-story project will be built just south of Sand Lake Road.

Intrawest's **Village of Imagine** plans to open its first resort village in Central Florida. Located on Universal Boulevard across from the Orange County Convention Center the new resort plans a mix of 1,000 residential homes, town homes, condo-hotel units, shops and restaurants. Completion of the first phase is expected in early 2008. The property includes two lakes, waterways and walkways, upscale dining and shopping. [www.villageofimagine.com](http://www.villageofimagine.com).

**The Peabody Orlando** plans groundbreaking for a major expansion in 2006, with completion in 2008/2009. A 35-story tower will house 750 guest rooms, bringing the

total count to 1,641 guest rooms. The hotel's meeting space will be expanded by 125,000 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space, for a total of 182,000 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space. The expansion design will showcase quintessential, exotic, Florida tropical landscaping, and maximize guests' enjoyment of the adjacent 50,000 square feet of natural wetland habitat which provides nesting, refuge and sustenance to North American migratory wildfowl, (such as the mallard duck, the same family as The Peabody Ducks), and indigenous Florida flora and fauna. [www.peabodyorlando.com](http://www.peabodyorlando.com).

**The Blue Rose Resort** plans to begin construction by the end of 2006. The towering luxury hotel is expected to cost \$850 million and take as long as three years to build. The location is planned for midway between the Orange County Convention Center and Universal Orlando. The project's first phase will include 515 rooms and suites, a theater that features Broadway shows, five restaurants and 75,000 square feet of meeting space. [www.TheBlueRose.com](http://www.TheBlueRose.com).

**Vista Cay at Harbor Square**, currently under construction, plans a 1,500 acre project that will include a state-of-the-art community for business and leisure visitors. Located on Lake Cay adjacent to the Orange County Convention Center, this Pulte-designed community will offer 674 luxurious condominiums, recreational amenities, shopping, entertainment, clubhouse with meeting rooms and resort-style pool. [www.vistacay.com](http://www.vistacay.com).

**Hilton Hotels** plans a 1,400 room, full service luxury convention hotel that will feature an elevated walkway linked to the north concourse of the Orange County Convention Center. Construction on the 26 acre property is scheduled to begin at the end of 2006 with completion in 2009. More than 130,000 square feet of convention space are planned along with a 15,000-square spa.

The International Drive Resort Area is comprised of businesses, including more than 30,000 rooms, that are within the boundaries of the International Drive Master Transit and Improvement District. The District was formed in 1992 under a public-private initiative with Orange County and the City of Orlando and is recognized as an outstanding example of co-operation between these three distinct entities that are jointly operated under this unique partnership by a governing board and an advisory board. The first district of its kind to be established in Florida, it has served as a prototype for other regions.

The District is responsible for operating the I-Ride Trolley System which provides transportation to the International Drive Resort Area businesses and makes recommendations to local and state government agencies on matters relating to traffic congestion, enhancement of pedestrian safety and the overall mobility and security for the district.