

BEDROCK COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
152 Madison Ave., Ste. 802, New York, NY 10016

SUMMER / FALL 2017

Facilities & Destinations

FOR ASSOCIATION & CORPORATE MEETING PLANNERS & TRADESHOW PROFESSIONALS

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Andria LaJeunesse, CEM
Vice President of Events & Education
Association For Creative Industries

QUICK TAKE:

ISLAND HOTEL NEWPORT BEACH



The April 18, 1870 edition of the *Daily Alta* — a San Francisco newspaper of the day — describes the naming of Newport Beach:

In 1860, the marshy lagoon that became Newport Harbor was first reported by the U.S. Coastal survey schooner HUMBOLDT, warning of "... a narrow mouth 50 yards in width blocked by a narrow bar and a frightful swell rolling at all stages of the tide, making it dangerous to cross in boats of any kind". Ten years later, Captain Samuel S. Dunnels ignored the warning and brought his small stern wheel steamer, VAQUERO, over the dangerous bar and established a small shipping business just across the channel from where the museum now stands. A "New Port" was established, and the name stuck.

Captain Dunnels and other developers at the time went on to build piers that generated trade for the port city. By the turn of the 20th century, the area was transformed, becoming noteworthy for its beaches and fishing. Today's Newport Beach is home to a thriving marina and miles of waterfront activities, both on the Pacific Coast and in its Back Bay, a nature reserve with hiking and biking trails.

Close to **LAX** and **John Wayne Airport**, the Orange County, CA city is an excellent option for meeting groups who wish to be close to popular attractions but away from distractions. Among the lodging choices is the 295-room **Island Hotel Newport Beach**. Located within footsteps of the headquarters of **PIMCO** and **Pacific Life**, the luxury hotel is a prime site for planners looking to stage events geared to the investment and insurance sectors. And as a privately owned hotel, it may afford planners additional



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price flexibility, as well as the ability to avoid some of the red tape and protocols that are common with brand-name hotels.

Housing an 8,700-sq.-ft. ballroom, the city's largest, and 30,000 sq. ft. of function space overall, the Island Hotel Newport Beach offers a comfortable setting for a variety of events. Suites on the upper levels of the property can be used for meetings and events, granting attendees a bird's-eye view of the Pacific Coast. Among the area's standout diversions are the nearby, upscale **Fashion Island** mall and two offsite **Tom Fazio**-designed golf courses.

Many of the hotel's outdoor poolside and patio areas can become direct extensions of indoor event rooms, an asset in Southern California where the weather is temperate most of the year. Regarding the setting, **Ashley Powell**, owner of Mission Viejo-based event-planning agency **Agape Planning**, commented, "We chose Island Hotel Newport Beach for our recent three-day event. . . . Our guests loved being outside on the terraces for our cocktail receptions. Once inside, the ballroom provided a stunning backdrop for our event's décor and theme." Powell concluded, "The service and cuisine were stellar."

Roni Trinidad, Vice President of Funds and Operations for global fixed-income manager PIMCO, shared similar sentiments regarding the catering and service at the property: "The staff is very professional, and they easily make requested adjustments to details of the program and meals — when both are already in motion. The quality of the food is exceptional, and we appreciate the customization of the menus. The staff's attention to detail and the high quality of customer service is why we return to the Island Hotel, again and again." —D.K.