



# Explore Southern California's most eclectic stretch of coastline in Marina del Rey

By Mike Cohen



The beautiful pool at the Ritz-Carlton Marina del Rey has handicapped lifts.

## MARINA DEL REY

Ever since I can remember, the Marc Jordan song with the lyrics “Living in Marina del Rey” has been ringing in my head. So when I planned our trip to California, the tune indeed led me to this destination.

Set in the heart of the Los Angeles coastline, Marina Del Rey (<http://www.visitmarinadelrey.com>) is a waterfront playground with endless harbor views and a relaxed “California cool” vibe on LA’s bustling Westside. Its prime location is four miles from LAX, steps from world-famous Venice Beach and is easily accessible to major Los Angeles attractions like Santa Monica and the Getty Museum.

With year-round sunshine and average temperatures in the mid-to-high 60s, the breezy, cool and idyllic way of life in the Marina appeals to visitors and locals.

## WHERE TO STAY

Tucked along the Pacific coast between Venice Beach and peaceful Playa Vista, The Ritz-Carlton Marina del Rey ([www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/california/marinadel-rey](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/california/marinadel-rey)) is one of the most ideally located luxury hotels near Culver City, to explore Southern California’s most eclectic stretch of coastline. Literally meaning “sea coast of

the king,” Marina Del Rey is aptly named, as it is home to more than 7,000 pleasure boats and yachts in one of the largest man-made marinas in the world, as well as shopping and gourmet dining.

The hotel is conveniently located near some of the most sought after tech companies such as YouTube, IMAX and the future Google campus. It recently underwent extensive guest room enhancements, finishing one of its premier ballrooms that overlooks the marina.

We are big fans of the Ritz-Carlton property in our native Montreal, so it was very exciting to spend the day at this Marina del Rey location and get a private tour of the facility. From private Juliet balconies off of every guest room, or from a restaurant terrace where handcrafted cocktails around a fire pit stir inevitable conversation, this is one of the finest luxury hotels in Marina del Rey. It features 304 guest rooms and suites with private balconies featuring marina and city skyline views. There are Exclusive key-access-only Ritz-Carlton Club® Level rooms, L.A.’s only waterfront pool and whirlpool and a newly renovated lobby lounge. I was thoroughly impressed with the state-of-the-art fitness center, with eucalyptus steam rooms, full showers, restrooms and keypad lockers with safe.

My family and I were escorted to the poolside and shown to a beautiful private ca-

bana. Inside there was an extremely comfortable couch, a television with a remote control, a fridge stocked with waters, soft drinks and fresh fruit and a basket full of delicious snacks. On a small table were a selection of nice magazines. Outside the covered structure were three nicely padded lounge chairs with towels and large umbrellas to block the sun. We were provided with a menu to the Waves Poolside Bar & Grill. After one of the staff members brought us a bottle of champagne we placed our order, a superb hamburger with salad, a chicken sandwich and some chicken strips. It all arrived promptly and perfectly prepared.

The pool was refreshing and the whirlpool even more refreshing. Using our pass key, we took a leisurely stroll outside the grounds to admire the marina and the many different boats.

Director of Sales and Marketing Ed Curry gave me a tour of the facility. The Cast & Plow Restaurant off the lobby offers one of the prettier patio layouts I have seen. At the gift shop Curry told me that skateboards actually represent the top-selling item. “We can’t keep them on the shelf long enough before we need to order more,” he said.

Up we went to the 12th floor to see one of the beautiful guest rooms with a view and then down a short flight of stairs into the exclusive Ritz-Carlton Concierge Club Lounge. This beautifully designed room

is open to all guests for an extra charge of \$250 a day for snacks, drinks and a private place to relax.

This is definitely a hotel I’d like to enjoy an extended stay at some time in the future.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

With regards to special needs guests this hotel absolutely has accommodations for guests in all areas. “It is worth sharing that California is very sensitive to people with special needs,” he said. “Hotels, restaurants and even recreational facilities are required to make accommodations for guests with special needs.”

The Ritz-Carlton Marina del Rey complies with all ADA requirements. They offer especially outfitted guestrooms and make special provisions in all areas of the hotel. There are ramps to the pool and lifts for both the pool and the Jacuzzi. The restaurant, Cast & Plow, has a wheelchair lift as well to ensure that guests have access to all areas of the restaurant.