

Business

Hilton Garden Inn to open its largest site in Waikiki

By [Allison Schaefer](#)s

Posted February 20, 2016

February 20, 2016



COURTESY HILTON GARDEN INN

On-site food and beverage options at the Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach will include a poolside rooftop bar.

Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach, the former Ohana Waikiki West, is slated to reopen this summer after completing a more than \$110 million renovation.

The property, at 2330 Kuhio Ave. on land owned by Queen Emma Co., will become Oahu's first Hilton Garden Inn. At 623 rooms, including 32 suites, the property will be the largest Hilton Garden Inn in the world. The hotel is owned by Honolulu's BlackSand Capital and Boston-based Rockpoint Group and will be managed by Evolution

Hospitality, a newcomer to Hawaii.

“Typically, a Hilton Garden Inn has a few hundred room keys,” said Stacy Manzo, director of sales and marketing for the HGI Waikiki Beach. “We are very excited to be opening the largest one. The entire building is all new. Every surface, every piece of furniture is brand new.”

The opening of the hotel is notable because it marks the entry of a new hotel brand and management company to Oahu. It brings a high volume of much-needed hotel room inventory to Waikiki, which has been suffering from severe property compression and high occupancy. It also expands the range of midpriced hotels in Waikiki, further gentrifies the Kuhio corridor and returns additional hotel jobs to the market.

The 659-room Ohana Waikiki West, which was managed by Outrigger Enterprises Group, closed March 27 after a 39-year run. Barry Wallace, executive vice president of hospitality services for Outrigger, said the property employed 175 workers at its peak.

“We closed the property with 90 employees — all of whom either retired or were able to find employment at one of our other properties,” Wallace said. “We’re excited to see the hotel reopen.”

Manzo said Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach is gearing up for a job fair March 9 at the Ala Moana Hotel from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Applicants can visit evolutionhospitality.com and go to the “careers” tab to register.

Manzo said the company will hire about 200 workers and is recruiting for a variety of jobs, including housekeeping managers, housekeepers, assistant front office managers and guest service agents, front office supervisors, bellmen, night auditors, bartenders, cocktail servers, engineers, maintenance staff, sales managers and assistant controllers.

“Some of the positions will start in April. Others will begin in May and June,” Manzo said.

Renovations at the new hotel are nearing completion, she said. Guest rooms have been redeveloped to cater to modern, multigenerational travelers. In keeping with the Hilton Garden Inn brand standard, all renovated rooms include Serta beds. There are microwaves, minifridges, clock radios with MP3 connections and Keurig coffee/tea makers. Guests have access to free business centers and free Wi-Fi in the lobby and in their rooms. Renovations also include a full-service restaurant and lounge, a grab-and-go market, an upgraded contemporary lobby with a two-story cathedral ceiling, an enhanced pool deck and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

Manzo said on-site food and beverage options will include the Holoholo Coffee Shop and Market, which will occupy the space left vacant by Starbucks on the lobby level. TR

Fire Grill, a Florida-based chain known for farm-to-table dining and creative drink mixologists, will move into the former Chili's space. There also will be a rooftop bar, which will be poolside.

Manzo said demand for the property already is strong.

"We began booking for Aug. 2 some time ago, but we are preparing for a soft opening on July 1," Manzo said. "Demand has been very good. We've got a lot of presales on the books. Pre-booking prices range from \$219 to \$249."

Joseph Toy, president and CEO of Hospitality Advisors LLC, expects that the property will be well received by the market, especially members of Hilton's loyalty programs who want to cash in on their points.

"Many people are interested in the value offered by the Hilton Garden Inn brand," Toy said. "In this case you get a Hilton product in a resort, and it's in a sweet spot because that midpriced market segment is underserved here. The property also is at a critical intersection of Kuhio Avenue right across from the International Market Place and near one of the main pedestrian arteries connecting to Kalakaua Avenue."