

## **A Return Visit To Carmel Lodge**

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A couple of months ago, I spent three nights at the Carmel Lodge, just as it was making its transition from more than 50 years of family ownership to one of the five properties owned by Coastal Hotel Group.

In mid-November, I returned for four more nights after new management had completed room renovations and property other changes.

So, here's an update from my first review:

- \* Rooms now have new mattresses and carpeting;
- \* In my two visits, I've stayed in rooms 140 and 143, both deluxe rooms and both in the back building. Room #140 is an upstairs corner with a fireplace; Room #143 is on the same wing and without a fireplace. But are fine choices;
- \* The property has a staff person on duty 24 hours per day for check-in convenience;
- \* I didn't have an iron or ironing board in my room, but when I requested one, a staff person brought it to my room with a few minutes;
- \* Carmel Lodge doesn't offer an elaborate continental breakfast, but fresh fruit and coffee area available in the lobby every morning. And copies of the San Francisco Chronicle and the Carmel Pine Cone for guests.
- \* When guests check-in, room radios are on, dialed to KRML, the all-jazz Carmel station. The station's studios are across the street and a minute's walk en route to Ocean Ave.
- \* Carmel Lodge now charges \$8 per day for parking, a policy similar to other Carmel accommodation choices. The rate will increase to \$10 on January 1, 2008.
- \* The property has a new entrance sign. The words "Carmel Sands Lodge" are still written above the entrance driveway; But the new sign reflects the properties new, preferred named.

And just like my previous stay, Carmel Lodge remains a convenient, fairly priced choice two blocks from the Carmel-by-the-Sea's main artery, Ocean Ave.

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