

2006 FRED HALL FISHING TACKLE & BOAT SHOW

THE BUENA VISTA EXPERIENCE: Check it out for yourself at the Hall show

The "Jewel of the East Cape" celebrates 30th Anniversary

BY STEVE CARSON
Special to Western Outdoor News

EAST CAPE — Some 30 years ago this coming October, Jesus "Chuy" Valdez first opened his doors to the public at what was then called "Spa Buena Vista" at Baja's East Cape region. It is so named because of the natural freshwater hot springs that are directly underground, and some longtime locals still refer to it by that name.

Almost 15 years ago the name was formally changed to Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort. Valdez has kept it in the family since then, and this 60-room tropical paradise featuring Mediterranean-style bungalows, relaxed luxury, and of course the Sea of Cortez keeps creating fishing and vacation



WHEN THE FISH ARE BITING well, flags fly in abundance aboard boats at the Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort.

memories that last forever.

The Buena Vista experience Although you will still often see Chuy Valdez "power walking" around the property, the hotel manager and guy in charge of everything these days is most definitely his oldest son, Esaul Valdez.

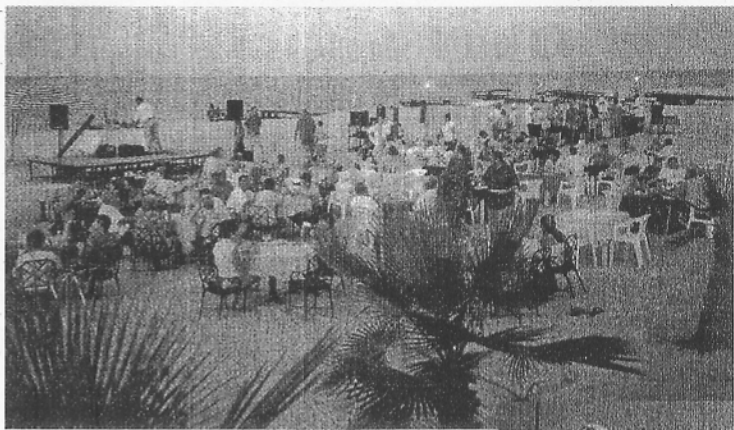
Middle son Axel Valdez is the marketing manager, and will be in the hotel's booth at the Fred Hall Shows in both Long Beach and Del Mar. Youngest son Felipe Valdez handles scheduling and boat assignments, while Hortencia Fischer is the office and reservations manager.

All the rooms have recently been redecorated. The restaurant offers a full menu for each meal, and eating out on the terrace is the way to go under almost any weather conditions. The swim-up bar anchors a spectacular swimming pool, and a traditional bar overlooks the beach. It is not the least bit unusual to spot multiple boiling roosterfish while seated there.

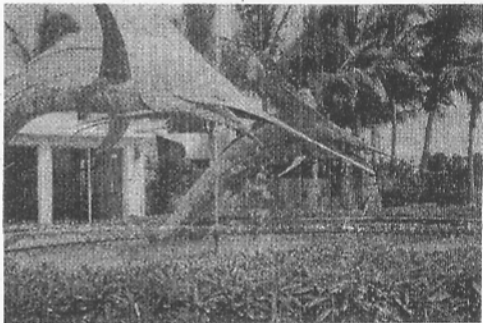
A day on the water

On a typical fishing day, anglers will head down to eat breakfast on the terrace at about 6:30 a.m. Almost any day of the year, this location has absolutely spectacular sunrises that are "almost" enough to make anyone want to delay going fishing. About 7 a.m. anglers head out onto the pier and load up onto their assigned boats.

Just a few dozen yards offshore are the pangas selling live bait. For most kinds of fishing, it's a good idea to purchase as many live caballito, mackerel,



MAJOR EVENTS AT THE HOTEL BUENA VISTA Beach Resort often call for dinner to be served right on the beach.



THE BEAUTIFUL "LEAPING MARLIN FOUNTAIN" in front of the hotel greets anglers while their bags are being unloaded.

mullet, sardinas [or whatever] as the boat can hold. Keep about \$20 in cash available for this.

After that, let the captain know what kind of fishing the group wants to do. There are normally at least a couple of choices, i.e.; inshore for roosterfish, offshore for marlin, or further offshore for tuna. There is some leeway of course, but don't expect to head 30 miles offshore for tuna and then come back to the beach for roosterfish on the same day. Leaving it completely in the captain's hands will often mean going after billfish, as it's usually their favorite.

All that said, the incredible fishing variety is what makes the East Cape so special. My

personal best trip out of Hotel Buena Vista last season included boat totals of 15 mixed billfish [striped marlin, sailfish and blue marlin] in 5 days fishing; with a single day best of 4 sailfish, 1 striped marlin, 4 roosterfish, 2 African pompano, 1 jack crevalle and 2 dorado [including a 52 pounder].

Lunch and a cooler full of beer and soft drinks are aboard, based on the order from the night before. My favorite is the "burritos de pollo" [chicken burritos], but other choices include fried chicken, beef burritos, and even ham sandwiches.

Be sure to order plenty of bottled water and keep hydrated. A good hat and polarized sunglasses, along with SPF15



TONY SHANLEY OF SAN DIEGO fooled this roosterfish with a live mackerel slow-controlled behind Captain Vicente Cosio's *Dusty B III* out of Hotel Buena Vista Beach Resort.

PHOTOS BY STEVE CARSON

sunblock are a must. Winter or early spring trips may require a sweatshirt during the early morning hours. Don't forget to tip the skipper daily, even if venturing out with him again the next morning.

The boats return to the hotel about 2:30 or 3 p.m. Many folks head immediately for the swim-up bar and amazing tropical-themed pool. As for myself, I grab a light spinning rod and hit the beach. Most days the surf catch is ladyfish and needlefish under 5 pounds, but luck and persistence can produce anything from jacks and sierra mackerel to a small roosterfish.

Dinner is served at about 7 p.m., and again the terrace is the place to be. Some nights there may be entertainment, from mariachis to folklorico. By about 9:30 p.m., things are winding down.

I leave it up to the individual if they want to head out to the handful of bars in Los Barriles, or hit the rack in anticipation of the next day's fishing.

Boats and skippers

It goes without saying that the hotel boasts a phenomenal fleet of fishing boats and expert local skippers, with

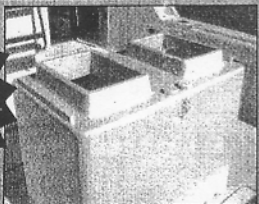
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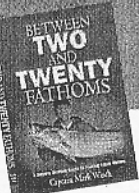
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