Wednesday, June 29, 2011

San Francisco hotels continue to up the wow factor

By Mark Chesnut

Whether you're looking for San Francisco hotels for your next business trip or perhaps as inspiration for your next California vacation, the city by the bay never fails to impress.

Business travelers wanting to stay close to San Francisco International Airport — which this year debuted its new, $383-million Terminal 2 — might want to check into the Hilton San Francisco Airport Bayfront, which has upgraded its event facilities with new lighting, color schemes and technology.

San Francisco's stylish boutique hotels are incredibly diverse, with upscale amenities and business-friendly services for every taste and budget. Among the newest is the Orchard Garden Hotel, which is quite likely San Francisco's greenest hotel. Rising near the Chinatown gate, this attractive, cleanly designed property has a 25-person boardroom and a scenic rooftop terrace that is ideal for small business events. Top-floor rooms are especially spacious, with private terraces that are perfect for relaxing.

For a funkier, hip vibe, consider Hotel Diva, which is renovating its stylishly witty décor and features meeting space as well as a small-but-cool business center with mod furnishings. Book a room on the Diva's Salon Floor, or its Design Within Reach suite, for the most amenities and space.

Sir Francis Drake, a Kimpton Hotel, just finished a renovation to all of its guestrooms and will soon undergo renovations of the lobby and its top floor Starlight Room lounge. Another Kimpton property, Palomar San Francisco, has expanded its "People in Motion" wellness program and now allows guests to borrow bikes for free. The W San Francisco, meanwhile, is to open a new restaurant, Trace, this summer.