

Waimea Plantation Cottages profitable for first time in 19 years

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Since Coast Hotels USA took over management of Waimea Plantation Cottages in July 2014, occupancy and revenue have increased significantly.

WPC General Manager [Gregg Enright](#) said it was a combination of a revitalized team and upgrades to the property.

In 2014, occupancy was at 65 percent, average room rates were \$215 and revenue per available room was \$142.

In 2015, occupancy rose to 71 percent. Average room rates increased, from \$215 to \$234, which took RevPAR from \$142 to \$174.

Enright, a former Outrigger Hotel and Resorts executive, has managed properties on Maui, Oahu, the Big Island, and Kauai. Coast Hotels asked him to take over the 61-cottage Waimea property in December 2014.

"First we went after the most important product on the property — the employees," he recalled. "We gave them uniforms, name tags, a raise, and said thank you for working with us." The management holds "mahalo gatherings" at least three times a year to boost workforce camaraderie.

The property also got a facelift, with new paint, air conditioning, 36-inch TVs, ceiling fans, curtains for shade, mattresses, and barbecue stations. The pool has been upgraded and the front desk is undergoing a renovation with a new decorative monkey pod station.

Coast Hotels put nearly \$1 million into the property upgrades. That allowed WPC to get "back on the radar" of wholesalers such as Pleasant Holidays & Journese, All About Hawaii, Mark Travel TMTC, Gulliver's Travel GTA, Expedia, Orbitz, Panda Travel, Sun Islands Holidays, Blue Sky Tours, and Kintetsu.

"There wasn't a whole lot of money being put in to the property," he said. "We've caught up on most everything and completely revamped it."

Enright says he's been asked by Coast Hotels to "lead the charge for expansion in Hawaii," and the company is in discussion with several properties — one in Waikiki, one on Maui, and two other on Kauai.

"Being able to show the turnaround and success of the property is the best way to go about it," he said. "We expect in the next year to 18 months to acquire at least not one or two more properties, and five new properties total within the next five years."

Lorin Eleni Gill covers tourism, health care, nonprofits and the University of Hawaii for Pacific Business News