

Stockton Downtown Marina Grand Opening

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The California Delta waterways in Fall are a picturesque and tranquil cruiser’s delight that should be experienced by all. This past October 30th, in the late afternoon hours of a bright and warm Fall Friday, the new Stockton Downtown Marina was inaugurated by Stockton Mayor Ann Johnston, and a host of regional dignitaries, adding yet another reason to visit the Delta, and the historic Port of Stockton. The Port of Stockton is the largest inland seaport in the state of California, located 75 miles from the Golden Gate Bridge up the San Joaquin River Deepwater Channel.

The grand opening festivities began at 5 PM, as Mayor Johnston and her party arrived by yacht at the new guest docks and promenade in front of the Waterfront Warehouse shops and restaurants, and carried on for an hour or so of ribbon cutting and congratulatory speeches and accolades. More than thirty local boats, including Sheriff’s Department and Coast Guard vessels, and approximately 150 people attended the opening ceremonies of the spectacular new marina and shore facilities. After the ceremonies free hors d’oeuvres, and a no-host bar, were provided to attendees by Chitiva’s Bar & Grill and Delight’s Café & Deli in the Waterfront Warehouse.

Local boaters were generally very impressed with the new facility and happy to have a new boating destination in the area. Blair Hake, a local boater, stated, “This is great. Now we have another place to come to and enjoy our boating adventures on the Delta”. A number of other boaters had just signed rental agreements that day and already moved their boat into a slip, happy to return to the Downtown Marina after years in other area marinas, waiting for the construction to be completed.

Officially touted as the “golden gem” of Stockton’s downtown redevelopment program, the new marina and shore facilities are the culmination of more than ten years of planning, designing and building, at a cost of nearly \$22 million. The new marina is an intriguing blend of classic waterfront brick-walks and inspired marina design, and covers nearly a mile of shoreline at the end of the Stockton deep-water channel. Nearly 1,400 feet of gated and secure guest docks line both sides of the downtown channel, providing water and power to visiting vessels, and easy access to the Stockton Ports Baseball Park, the Stockton Arena, Lexington Hotel, Weber Park, and downtown restaurants, shops, and movie theatres. The Stockton Children’s Museum is also located on the south shore, just a short walk away, and is well worth a visit.

The main marina is located on the south side of the channel and features 48 covered slips and 12 open slips ranging in size from 50 to 80 feet. The covered slips provide a dramatic backdrop to the downtown area, with large white triangular fabric “sails” suspended above on towering piling masts to shade the slips below, projecting an image of the large sailing schooners that delivered passengers and freight up the channel to old

Stockton as far back as 1848. In the evening the overhead canopies are illuminated setting them free in the air and casting a gentle glow of light across the quiet Delta waters. These docks are available for long-term lease and feature a gated security system with security cameras, and dock boxes, water, power, and cable TV amenities at each slip. A new shower and restroom facility and ample parking is located nearby on shore. Rates will vary from \$8.00 to \$12.00 per foot / month for permanent slips, depending on length.

The marina also features a new double-wide launch ramp facility and parking lot, and plans are in the works for a new 150 boat dry-stack boat storage facility and fuel dock.

The marina operations are being managed by Westrec Marinas Management, Inc, who also manage the River Point, King Island, and Tower Park marinas in the Delta area. Westrec opened their new Marina Office in the Waterfront Warehouse building to coincide with the marina grand opening and provided free hors d'oeuvres, champagne, and soft drinks to celebrate and welcome attendees and customers. Westrec's Regional Manager, Sherri Keyes, said that she's looking forward to working with the City to make the new marina a great experience, and looks forward to serving everyone whether they are bringing their boat in for a short visit or taking a slip on a long-term basis.

As evening fell and the ceremonies ended, the dock lighting illuminated the picturesque sail canopies of the covered docks floating over the quiet waters of the delta channel, and the long concrete walk ways of the guest docks along the shore, adding a new and vibrant element to downtown Stockton. This is a marina well worth exploring, if only for its unique design.