

dining around

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New Buster's Beach House opens in National City's new Marina Gateway area

With its laid-back, fun and tropical theme, the new Buster's Beach House & Longboard Bar makes for a sensational addition to the South Bay dining scene. The restaurant is vibrant, hip and fun for folks of all ages, and offers an incredible and diverse menu that will make you want to "hang ten" at Buster's all the time. Buster, the character

for the restaurant's theme, is a tall, barrel-chested bear of a man who loved surfing and the tropics. He traveled, worked in restaurants, saved his money and ended up buying his

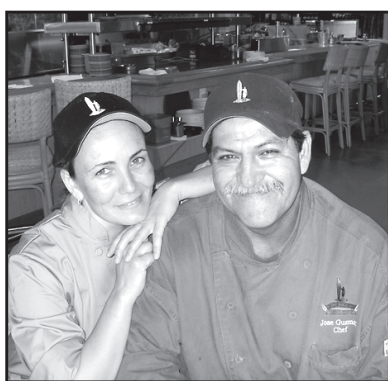


From left, CEO Jim Glasgow and Alvetta Higgins.

own restaurant in California, naming it Buster's Beach House & Longboard Bar. Today, there are several Buster's locations, including one in Long Beach, Seaport Village and now this great new location, just off the I-5 at the Bay Marina exit. You can't miss the bright yellow building.

CEO Jim Glasgow (who, interestingly, looks somewhat like what Buster would look like, complete with that healthy California summer glow), is a hands-on operator who has spent many days at the new location with GM Alvetta Higgins.

The restaurant radiates a high-energy ambiance. An outrigger canoe hangs over the entry way, along with a couple of tiki torches. In the main dining room, you'll find high ceilings, surf and tropical décor (including a longboard and a VW Van on the ceiling), with the Longboard Bar in



From left, chefs Anelia Mateo-Laurence and Jose Guzman.

a corner. Outside is an expansive patio with umbrellas, heaters and a 10-seat fire pit. Next to that are a couple of fabulous banquet rooms that would be great for any kind of private function. For football fans, Buster's has the complete NFL Sunday ticket.

Although it's a cool hangout, Buster's is all about the food. They offer "big taste, a lot of crunch, color and buzz" here, serving breakfast (from 6 a.m.), lunch, dinner and a happy hour. Speaking of happy hour, it's a long one here, from 2 to 7 p.m. Margaritas, Mai Tai's and Long Beach iced teas go for only \$3.50, while a pint of Buster's Pale Ale or Amber sell for only \$3. The bar menu has \$1 fish or carne asada tacos, \$3 crab cakes (delicious), nachos, onion rings or \$5 wings, pork luau sliders, chicken tenders and a steak sandwich. For breakfast, the eggs Benedict is highly suggested as is the prime rib hash and the "Jamaica Y'Own Omelet." The lunch menu is a hit, but here we'll look at the more expanded dinner menu. For appetizers, and if you are in a group try a sampler (either the shortboard, or the longboard, depending on your appetite). The longboard includes Buster's tasty onion rings, voodoo chicken, crunchy Barbados crab cakes, seared tuna tsunami, tempura coconut shrimp, fried calamari and several dipping sauces. These items are also available as individual appetizers. Among the entrée highlights are the pork luau (sweet and tangy pork cooked slow for seven hours in banana leaves and served with a mango chutney, jasmine rice and veggies); the macadamia-nut crusted chicken (with garlic mashed potatoes and stir-fry vegetables); Balinese baby back ribs; prime rib; paella; teriyaki steak; and tempura coconut shrimp. There's also fish and chips, noodles, pasta and gourmet pizzas galore. With its great food and festive atmosphere, Buster's is worth a visit at 740 Bay Marina Dr. (619-336-1783).

SD Best publishes this Sunday

Find out who won the coveted SD Best awards in this Sunday's Union-Tribune's special "San Diego's Best" section, which salutes the winners and nominees in more than 78 categories. Not only will you find out who received the most votes for favorite dining categories, but also the top picks for retailers, services and businesses throughout the county. Congratulations to all the nominees and winners!

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