

Manchebo celebrating 50 years

Manchebo Beach Hotel officially opened its doors on December 15, 1966 as Aruba's newest tourism development on the beautiful shores of Aruba. The hotel developed by ALM pilots Mense and Fokker-Hamminga was the first of its kind on the Manchebo/Eagle Beach area. Aruba's tourism was thriving well at the time with the Aruba Caribbean Hotel and the Sheraton on Palm Beach and the Talk of the Town Hotel in Oranjestad amongst others.

In 1970 Ike Cohen became one of the major shareholders and started managing the hotel. At the time Ike Cohen and his family were already running the Talk of the Town Hotel in Oranjestad as well the famous Talk of the Town Restaurant. Ike Cohen went to work at the Manchebo and turned the hotel to a higher level. Affiliated with the Best Western brand the Manchebo Beach Hotel built up a loyal clientele of repeat visitors over the years all looking for a tranquil and casual beach getaway.

Ike Cohen was a successful businessman and one of the co-founders of the Aruba Hotel Association. In 1978 Ike Cohen received the first ever "Hotelier of the Year Award" of the Caribbean Hotel Association. Later, the Queen of The Netherlands knighted Ike in honor of his leadership in establishing tourism as a valuable economic resource for the island. Ike Cohen passed away at age 96 on September 23, 2007. Earlier this year on February 11, 2016 the Government of Aruba unveiled the "Ike Cohen Monument" at Plaza Turismo located just opposite the Talk of the Town Hotel. A monument dedicated to Aruba's many successful tourism pioneers.

The most recent rejuvenation of the resort started in 2003 when Ike Cohen appointed the current resort general manager Edgar Roelofs. Together with company director Bill Crona the wellness concept was introduced with the opening of Spa del Sol. This exotic Caribbean-Balinese outdoor spa oasis designed and managed by the late Fred Abspoel opened its doors in 2004 and set the tone for years to come.

A full resort renovation commenced in 2009 which included the 72 resort rooms, restaurants, bars, beach pavilion and public areas resulting in a successful 4-star boutique wellness resort. The pool-side restaurant was turned into a fine dining venue in 2012 and named after its legendary owner "Ike's Bistro" as a tribute for his passion for the culinary.

Today Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa is Aruba's leading wellness resort offering daily yoga and Pilates classes, Spa del Sol, a fitness room and of course a health focused culinary menu in the resort restaurants. In the morning expect home-made granola, steel-cut oatmeal and fresh fruit smoothies to start off the day. Longtime guests mingle with a new generation of wellness-conscious travelers who are drawn to this intimate oceanfront oasis as much for its setting as its thoughtful grasp of island culture and cuisine and modern-day services and amenities.

The resort has always been a favorite with honeymooners from North America and Europe. However the first honeymoon couple to ever stay at the resort was Glen and Aurora Carvahal from Aruba. Married on December 27, 1966 the couple spent their honeymoon at the Manchebo Beach Hotel. Today's resort general manager Edgar Roelofs recalls receiving a phone call from their daughter Juliet in December 2006 advising that her parents were Manchebo's first honeymooners 40 years ago and that she wanted to organize a nice dinner at the French Steakhouse for their 40th anniversary. "Ten years later we could not resist to invite the Carvahal's to return once more now for their 50th anniversary and to share with us the Manchebo of 1966. The family is set to have a nice family dinner at the newly renovated The Chophouse on December 27, 2016 with compliments of the Manchebo Team" adds Edgar Roelofs.

"What truly has made Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa a home away for so many customers over the years are our friendly and dedicated resort employees. It is like coming home for so many of our guests. From Sandra and Dilia at the resort's front desk (together good for over 75 years of service) to Ignacio "Smiley" at the Pega-Pega Bar, Cynthia welcoming you at breakfast, Harold at The Chophouse and Chef Willy in the kitchen. It's the Manchebo team that makes the customer experience the One Happy Island experience that it is until today".

"This December 13, 2016 the Manchebo Team will be celebrating its 50th gold anniversary during the annual Holidays celebration in style at the Hyatt Regency ballroom sharing great memories and enjoying a good party. Of course our loyal repeat guests have received a great promotional offer as a thank you for their patronage over the years" says Carla van Loenen of Sales & Marketing.