



# Is it worth the investment of updating the look of your resort with new furniture?

by Bill Bongaerts

Is it worth the investment of updating the look of your resort with new furniture? For many resorts, the answer is yes; and now may be exactly the right time.

Updating your gathering areas with stylish lounge seating will create a more relaxed and inviting environment for guests to sit comfortably and linger over drinks and conversation. Replacing out-of-date pieces with newer, more versatile designs will project a positive image and enhance the overall guest experience.

In fact, evidence suggests that such updates often result in improved guest satisfaction ratings. In their article titled "The impact of servicescape on quality perception" published in European Journal of Marketing, Dr. Anja Reimer and Richard Kuehn offer empirical research that shows that the physical surroundings of a service environment like a hotel influences customers' evaluations of perceived quality. Dr. Anna Mattila, whose research focuses on consumers' emotional responses to service encounters, offered evidence in her article titled "Consumers' Value Judgments" published in The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly that guests turn to the physical environment to look for tangible evidence that indicate whether the hotel experience is good or bad.

In other words, when your resort looks good, your guests will feel good. And keeping your guests feeling good about their stay at your resort can mean increased business and greater market share – which makes you feel good too!

You may agree that updating the look of your resort with new furniture is a good investment and yet wonder if now is a good time to make that

investment. Now could possibly be the best time to do it. A slowdown in the number of guests visiting your resort allows for the updating to be accomplished with less disruption than when you are extremely busy. A fresh look may be the catalyst to bring in more guests and you will be looking your best when the flow of guests to your resort increases to full capacity.

But to get maximum return on your investment, it is important to consider the quality of construction, especially for heavily-used furniture such as chairs. Be sure to choose furniture that is specially made to withstand the daily wear and tear of resort activity.

Other considerations include:

- How easily can the furniture be customized for your décor? Look for a wide variety of finishes and fabrics so that you can make a statement with the pieces you buy.
- Is the furniture versatile? All-weather furniture that can be used outdoors as well as appropriate for indoor use is often desirable for resorts where indoor gathering spots transition to outdoor spaces. Aluminum, steel, wicker, wood and polypropylene all work well outdoors. Here's a guide to help you decide what will work best for your resort:
  - o Aluminum and Steel – Metal furniture is strong and withstands heavy abuse. Quality metal furniture designed for use outdoors should have a smooth, sleek design, free of sharp corners and unwanted nooks that can harbor fungus and bacteria.
  - o Wicker – All-weather wicker is typically made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or recycled material. A variety of patterns and colors make this a very attractive and popular option.
  - o Wood – Teak and cedar woods work extremely well outdoors and

can be used year-round. They are designed to weather naturally and last for years.

o Polypropylene – Furniture made from polypropylene is attractive, colorful, versatile, easy to store and almost indestructible. These pieces are highly resistant to water, sun, and sharp objects.

o Tempered Glass – Tempered glass is great for outdoor tables because it is durable, versatile and easy to maintain. It can be lacquered for color coordination or contrast or custom designed for the unique needs of the resort.

• Do the pieces invite guests to sit and relax? After all, relaxation in one of the primary reasons why people visit resorts. So it is

important that the furniture create a comfortable environment that enhances guests' experience.

Whether it is a few key pieces or replacing entire rooms of furniture, updating the look of your resort may be just what you need to create an unforgettably positive experience for your guests.

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*Bill Bongaerts is president of Beaufurn, LLC, a supplier of high-quality, innovatively designed furnishing solutions to hotels, restaurants, universities, airports, food courts, coffee shops and commercial customers worldwide. Call (888) 766-7706 or visit [www.beaufurn.com](http://www.beaufurn.com) for more information.*



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## CALENDAR of Events

New England Eco-Hospitality Expo  
May 25 - 25, 2010  
Grappone Conference Center in Concord, N.H.

2010 ARDA New England Meeting  
June 7 - 8, 2010  
Resort Trades is a Conference Sponsor

Green Travel Summit  
June 10 - 11, 2010

HITEC 2010  
Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida USA  
June 21 - 24, 2010

ARDA-Southwest Regional Meeting  
July 26 - 27, 2010  
Hotel Tucson City Center Tucson, AZ

West Coast Green Lodging Conference  
August 22 - 25, 2010  
Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe Hotel & Ski Resort in South Lake Tahoe, Calif

Hospitality Design Boutique Exposition & Conference  
September 13 - 14, 2010  
Miami Beach Convention Center

CARE 51st Semi-Annual Fall Conference  
September 25 - 28, 2010  
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Annual Vacation Ownership Investment Conference  
October 4 - 7, 2010  
Resort Trades is a Media Sponsor