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Architectural Concepts Receives ARDA Awards

For Interior Design – New Resort Unit

San Diego Firm Honored for The Island Empress Resort

SAN DIEGO, CA (March 11, 2009) - Architectural Concepts, Inc. (ACI) a San Diego firm has been awarded a Silver Award in the American Resort Development Association (ARDA) Awards Program. Selected from a field of international entries, ACI's work on The Island Empress Resort (Santa Rosa Island, Florida) was selected as a silver finalist in the Resort Architecture and Interior Design (New Resort Unit) category. The top award (ARDY) winner will be announced at a Gala held in conjunction with the American Resort Development Association annual convention in Orlando Florida on Wednesday, April 1.

The Island Empress is a five-star luxury hotel and fractional development on Pensacola Beach developed by Gulfwind Management LLC. The high-end prototype unit created for the fractional development's sales center is light, airy and elegantly reminiscent of a fine Southern home, utilizing a palate of soft white and silver, accented with turquoise and coral hues. According to Margit Whitlock AIA, principal of the San Diego-based firm says she and her team "were focused on producing a luxurious as well as comfortable environment, using custom furniture in fine fabrics and textures to reflect the ambiance of the casual elegance found throughout the Gulf Coast.

"We began our conceptual branding for The Island Empress from what we refer to as the '**Concentric Design Process**'. The implication being that we design from a common center--The Guest Experience---and built a method for development that is structured concentrically and supports marketing, sales, management and ultimately the owners and guests. Our approach is unique and we are pleased that this model resort suite was well received by the judges," she explained.

ACI has been honored with numerous awards including the ARDY for Resort Design for Cibola Vista Resort and Spa (Peoria, Arizona) and Club Regina Resorts (Cancun and Cabo San Lucas, Mexico) for Resort Design -- Refurbishment. The independently judged ARDY is one of the trade association's top awards. Last year the firm was also the recipient of the prestigious ARDA ACE Community Service Award for its benefit for San Diego's Habitat for Humanity.

Architectural Concepts, Inc. is a full service planning, architectural and interior design firm located in San Diego, CA. **ACI's** Principal, Margit Whitlock-Espinosa, AIA, is a licensed architect in Florida, California, Arizona, Nevada and Texas. She chairs the American Resort Development Association (ARDA) Design and Construction Committee. The design firm is located at 3015 St. Charles Street, Suite B, San Diego, CA 92110. www.4designs.com For more information about **Architectural Concepts** call 619-531-0110.

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