

Presented by the DooWop Preservation League.

The mission of the Doo Wop Preservation League is to foster awareness, appreciation, and education of the popular culture and imagery of the 1950's and 1960's, and to promote the preservation of the largest collection of mid-century resort architecture found in the United States.

The Doo Wop Preservation League is a non-profit organization that is supported by its membership and donations.

Become a member and help support Doo Wop.

We would like to thank our sponsors: Crest Savings Bank, New Jersey Historical Commission, Department of State and the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts.

DOOWOP
RESERVATION LEAGUE

**3201 Pacific Avenue, Wildwood, NJ 08260
609-523-2400 • www.doowopusa.org**

This guide designed by Beth Granigan and Richard Stokes. Written by George Thomas. Illustrations by Tony Bracali. Photography by Julie Marquart and others. Research based on studios conducted by the University of Pennsylvania, Yale and Kent State Universities led by Steve Izenour, Daniel Vierya, Jason Adolff and Susan Snyder.

The Tour Guide

Our map is organized spatially from south to north but a variety of tours can be created - famous resorts, continents, trademarks, and then-current events. Street names form the scaffold for being oriented on the island. Water-related street names run the length of the island while the cross streets are arranged in clusters that define location. At the south end in Wildwood Crest, streets are named for cities from nearby Trenton to exotic Hollywood and then make a transition to domestic plants. Streets in old Wildwood are named for local families and then local trees. North Wildwood streets are numbered from 26th to First. So hop on your bike or jump in your car. By day - or best by night when the neon glows - experience the architecture of America's hippest resort.

A century ago when Wildwood was a tangle of trees on the barrier beach,

its first builders looked to the past for inspiration. A Roman arch spanned the drive into Wildwood Crest and Spanish and New England colonial houses vied for attention on Pacific Avenue. **In the 1950s, the past-oriented world was turned upside down.** Rock-n-roll won out over sentimental crooning. James Dean and Marlon Brando established the teenager as the target market and a new medium - television, provided new sources of information. Sputnik, intercontinental rockets, and computers aimed the world toward an ever-changing future. Wildwood's developers made a collective choice to tie their resort to the rocket of pop culture.

The completion of the Garden State Parkway in the 1950s triggered Wildwood's boom making it accessible to millions of people from New York to Baltimore. Freed by the car they could find lodging far from the old center near the transit stations. This led to a new generation of car-oriented motels. Wildwood's designers caught the spirit of the new age - not with the grim Stalinist modern of urban centers but with names and forms that conveyed the cool world of rock-n-roll, cars with tailfins, guys with slicked back hair and bobby-soxed girls rockin' at the hop. Our name for this style is Doo-Wop. Taken from the nonsense lyrics of rock-n-roll that were calculated to enrage parents, it suggests Wildwood's in-your-face design.

By adopting motel names from pop songs, flashy cars, movies and other commercial products, the Wildwood motel builders turned pop culture into advertising for their resort. And by redesigning the Wildwood motel into a teenagers' fantasy, modest buildings synthesized form and function to become icons. In car-crazed America, the first step was to be car friendly with parking out front. The tail-finned dream-machines in the parking area were good advertising. By putting a pool in the center and framing it with the motel, the building became the stage and motel guests were both actors and audience.

The Wildwood motel raises important design issues. Like modern office buildings, most motels are similar in size and location. The problem was how to make relatively anonymous buildings be sufficiently memorable so that guests would return to them the

following year. One solution lay in making the design and name become synonymous and if the name conveyed hot topicality so much the better.

Wildwood's best buildings manage to catch the eye and the mind on multiple levels. Some examples: The blue tile and blue paint trim of the Blue Jay motel suggests the commonly known bird; the colonial sign and anchor of the Newport Motel represented old Newport but rode the wave of the Newport Jazz Festival. (Remember the movie High Society with Louis Armstrong, Bing Crosby, and Grace Kelly set in Newport?). Or how about the royal purple of the Monaco that played



on the marriage of Philadelphia's favorite daughter Grace Kelly to Monaco's crown prince Ranier? Pop tunes overlapping with beach themes were good too - for instance Harbor Lights and Ebb Tide. Cars were hot too. In the 1950s, the Packard automobile was the power car of the gear heads; the Bel Air was a popular Chevrolet but also a play on the good air of the shore. Puns may be the lowest form of humor but they are memorable.

Other motels adopted names from places that "jet setters" were visiting in an ever-shrinking globe. When Frank Sinatra flew to Rio in a movie, motels were named the Rio, the Caribbean, the Tahiti, and the Royal Hawaiian. When Jack Kerouac's On the Road took him across the southern border, Siesta gained currency. A European fling might be associated with the Monaco and the Brittany, while the Florentine, the Tuscany, and the Gondolier all spoke to South Philadelphia's Italian community. Ironically, it is rare that the building actually looks like the named place. A detail, such as a sleeping Mexican on the Siesta sign, the mural of Venice for the Gondolier or the half-timber ornament of the Brittany, usually conveys enough of the image for success.

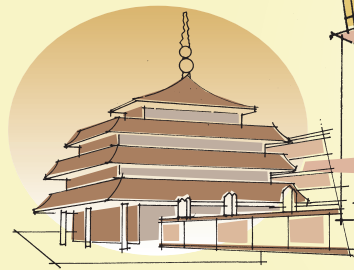
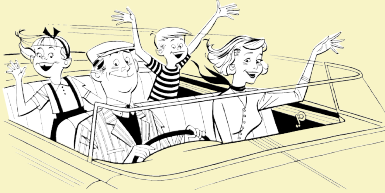
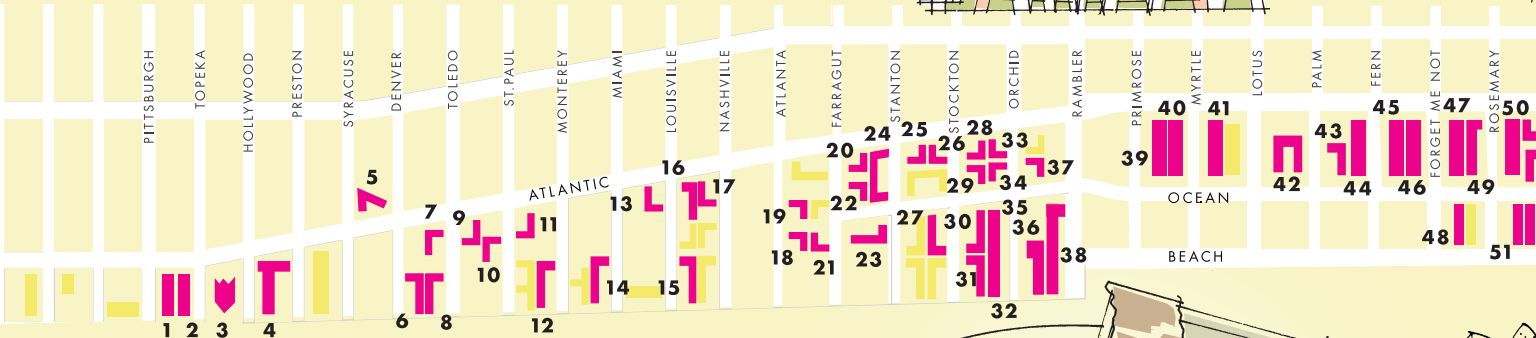
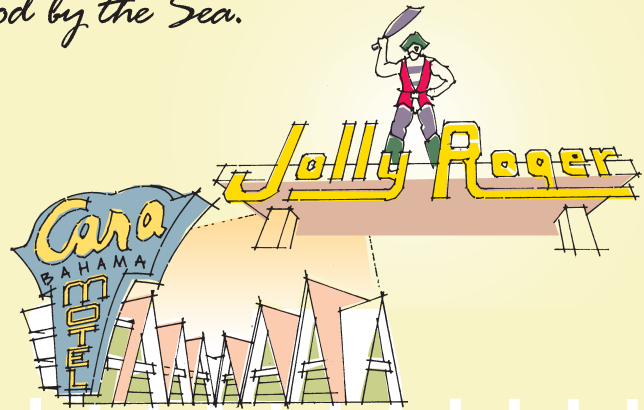


There is a not so obvious down side to icons based on pop history. Current events lose their meaning when they drift into the past. There haven't been too many Packards or Chevy Bel Airs on the road for a few years; the 1950s bio and movie of hip artist Paul Gauguin no longer is an obvious link between Brittany and Tahiti; satellites have become commonplace. Fortunately the associated design features, tail fins, angled walls like radio and TV studios, cantilevered wing roofs supported on the most minimal of lally columns, and the array of shaped metal and neon signs, retain their outlaw energy. Modern additions from plastic palms to roof-top wharfs and lighthouses prove that the attitude that made Doo-wop like rock-n-roll will never die!

Hop on your bike or jump in your car and experience the architecture of America's hippest resort - Wildwood by the Sea.

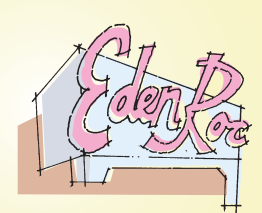
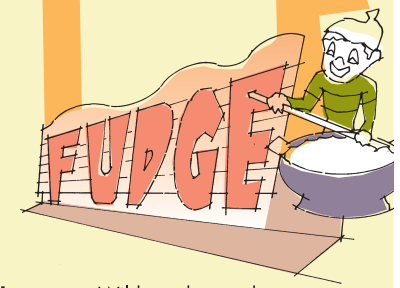
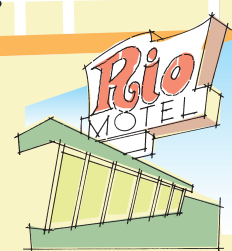
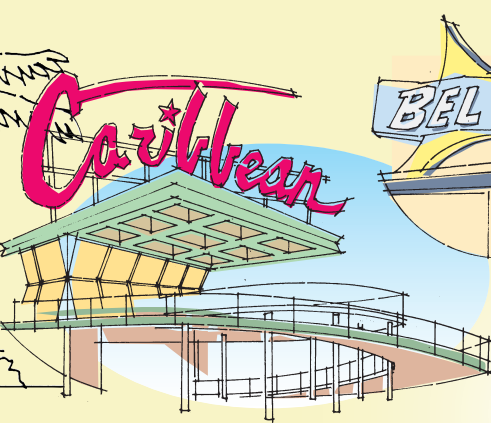
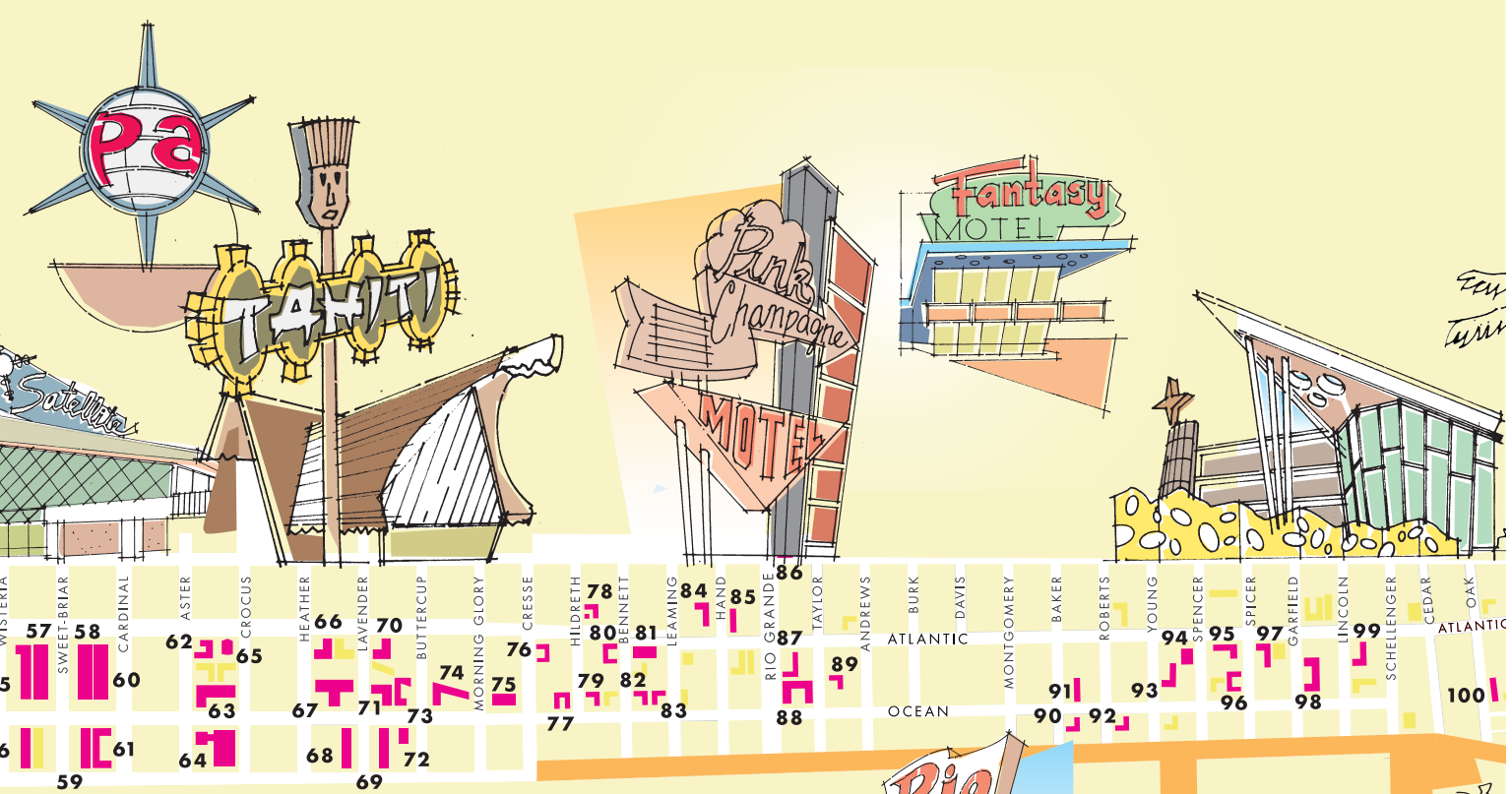
The Crest - Around the World Tour in 80 days or 80 minutes •

Wildwood Crest was the last part of the island to develop. Its beachfront contains five to eight story apartments of the sort that are found at the edges of most cities. At the Wildwood edge are the Caribbean and the Bel Air which stand across the street from each other at Buttercup and Ocean. They pull out all the stops in 1950s detail and lighting. What's not to like about cantilevered cornices, flying ramps, and angled glass? The Captain's Table, Admiral and Commander each play on the status of an ocean cruise. A round-the-world sea cruise would link many of the locales suggested by motel names: Royal Hawaiian, Tahiti, Singapore, Pyramids, Tangiers, Caribbean and Cape Cod. Or you can travel across time at the Crusader, the Aztec, the Jolly Roger, and the Frontier but the Pan American and the Satellite would be faster.



Wildwood Crest

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Commander Motel - 1967 | 14 Coliseum - 1957 | 28 Dunes Motel | 42 Jolly Roger Motel - 1959 |
| 2 Granada Motel - 1966 | 15 Crown Motel - 1959 | 29 Hi Lili Motel - 1975 | 43 Palm Beach - 1967 |
| 3 Captains Table Restaurant | 16 Biscayne Motel - 1968 | 30 Bonanza Motel - 1962 | 44 Cara Mara Motel |
| 4 Villa Nova Motel - 1964 | 17 Tempo - R.I.P. - 1960 | 31 Swan - 1958 | 45 Gold Crest Motel - 1968 |
| 5 La Vita Motel - 1968 | 18 Lampliter Motel - 1960 | 32 Astronaut | 46 Imperial 500 Motel - 1968 |
| 6 Paradise Motor Inn | 19 Catalina - 1960 | 33 Casa Bahama Motel - 1969 | 47 VIP Motel - 1965 |
| 7 Ala Kai Motel - R.I.P. 1955 | 20 Three Coins Motel - 1966 | 34 Kona Kai Motel - 1968 | 48 Armada Motor Inn - 1973 |
| 8 Cavalier Motel - 1967 | 21 Town & Country | 35 Royal Hawaiian - 1979 | 49 Compass Motel - 1965 |
| 9 Blue Marlin Motel - 1962 | 22 Hawaii Kai Resort - 1965 | 36 Singapore Motel - 1962 | 50 Shalimar Motel - 1962 |
| 10 Carriage Stop Motel | 23 Saratoga Motel - 1960 | 37 Waterways Motel - 1966 | 51 Bristol Plaza Motel - 1970 |
| 11 Pyramid Resort Motel - 1962 | 24 Casa Nova Motel - 1957 | 38 Oceanview Motel - 1963 | 52 Nautilus Motel - 1965 |
| 12 Monterey | 25 Tahiti Motel - 1963 | 39 Diamond Crest Motel - 1968 | 53 Viking Motel - 1965 |
| 13 South Beach - 1964 | 26 Silver Dollar Motel - 1959 | 40 Nomad Motel - 1962 | 54 Olympic Beach Motel - 1966 |
| | 27 Beach Colony Motel - 1967 | 41 Sand Dune Motel - 1970 | 55 Hialeah Resort Motel - 1966 |



Wildwood - the original seaside town • Wildwood started near Rio Grande Avenue and the original train station. The character of early resort buildings can be seen in the Victorian wing of the Avalon. Here contemporary themes dawn such as the Aquarius. High-profile resorts with good name recognition form an important group - Aladdin, Eden Roc, Stardust, Tropicana, Rio, and Riviera. These link Wildwood's small motels to the glamour of big-time gambling and travel. The flaring fins of the Tropicana, the played columns of the Bonito, the floating roof of the Fantasy, the cantilevered balconies and wings of the Eden Roc, the zig-zag glazing of the Ocean Sands and the Rio and the angled wall of recording studios for the Sea Winds make Wildwood a showcase of contemporary style.

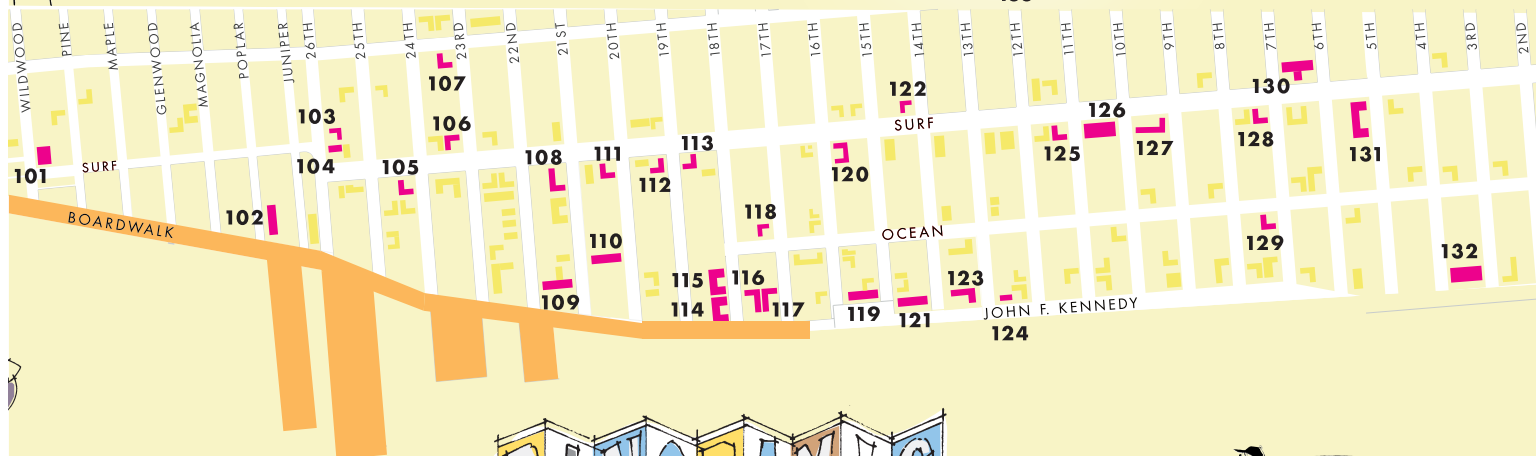
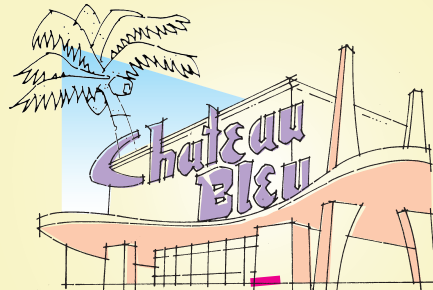
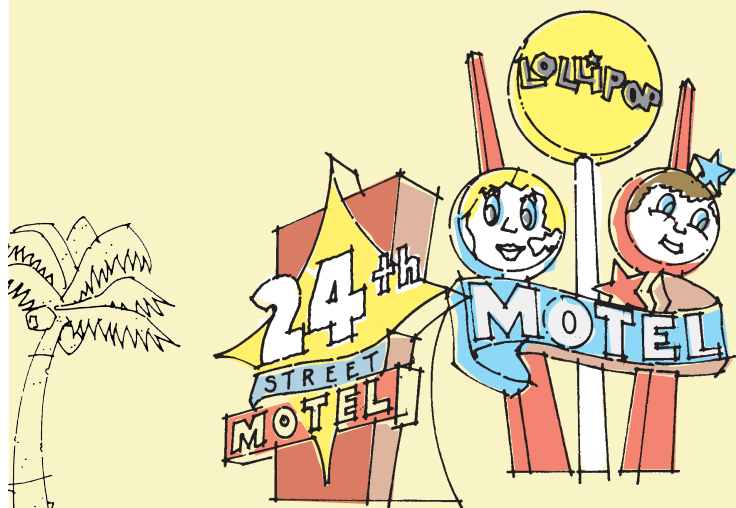
- 56 Waikiki Motel - 1970
- 57 Tangiers Motel - 1964
- 58 Cape Cod Inn Motel - 1966
- 59 Fleur de Lis Motel - 1957
- 60 Yankee Clipper Motel - 1966
- 61 Crusader Motel - 1968
- 62 Satellite Motel - 1955
- 63 Park Lane Motel - 1960
- 64 Pan American Hotel - 1963
- 65 Hudson's Restaurant - 1954
- 66 Ebb Tide Motel - R.I.P. - 1952
- 67 Carousel Motel - 1952
- 68 Attache Motel - 1966
- 69 Gondolier Motel - 1965

- 70 Aztec Motel - 1960
- 71 American Safari - 1969
- 72 Surf Side Restaurant - 1963
- 73 Caribbean Motel - 1950
- 74 Bel Aire Motel - 1960
- 75 Siesta - 1960

- Wildwood**
- 76 Sea Gull Motel - 1958
 - 77 Ocean Crest Motel - 1950
 - 78 Jays Motel - 1947
 - 79 Sea Kist Motel - 1956
 - 80 Eden Roc Motel - 1965
 - 81 Blue Jay Motel
 - 82 Lu Fran Motel - 1960
 - 83 Starfire Motel - 1968
 - 84 Pink Champagne - 1971
 - 85 Sea Shell Motel

- 86 Fantasy Motel - 1956
- 87 Starlux Motel - 1957
- 88 Rio Motel - 1952
- 89 Aquarius - 1971
- 90 Monaco Motel - 1961
- 91 Caprice Motel
- 92 Casa Del Sole - 1972
- 93 Tropicana Motel - 1968
- 94 Wildwood Diner - 1955
- 95 Skylark Motel - 1954
- 96 Stardust Motel - 1954
- 97 Quebec Motel - 1964

North Wildwood • North Wildwood is more residential in nature but there is a definite Mediterranean theme for motels beginning with the Grecian Gardens, the Tuscany and the nearby Firenze. Among the most imaginative signs are the great globes of the Lollipop motel, the hot neon arrow of the Bel-Aire Motel, the rotating flame of the Flame Inn, and the streamlined 1950s car details on the sign of the Grey Manor Motel.



PANORAMIC MOTEL APTS



- 98 Ocean Sands Motel - 1965
- 99 Midtown Motel - 1967
- 100 Royal Canadian
- 101 Laura's Fudge - 1955
- 102 Shore Plaza

North Wildwood

- 103 Bird of Paradise - 1965
- 104 Packard Motel - 1960
- 105 24th St. Motel - 1953
- 106 El Capitan Motel - 1965
- 107 Lollipop Motel - 1970
- 108 Panoramic Motel - 1964
- 109 Lampost Beach - 1973
- 110 Sans Souci Motel
- 111 Le Marque Motel - 1961
- 112 Florentine Family Motel - 1977
- 113 Tuscany Motel - 1978

- 114 Buccaneer Motel - 1968
- 115 Malibu Motel - 1949
- 116 Sahara Motel - 1969
- 117 Pink Shell Motel - 1965
- 118 Golden Rail Motel - 1967
- 119 Matador Motel - 1960
- 120 Surf 16 Motel - 1965
- 121 Le Boot Motel - 1958
- 122 Athens - 1970
- 123 American Inn Motel - 1967
- 124 Trylon Motel - 1960
- 125 Bel-Aire Motel

- 126 Sea Rose - 1963
- 127 Chateau Bleu Motel - 1962
- 128 Surfside 7
- 129 Friendship 7 Motel - 1968
- 130 Lurae Motel - 1955
- 131 Caribbean Breeze - 1963
- 132 Acropolis Motel - 1976
- 133 Cool Scoops Ice Cream