

Northern Michigan Gets a Big Dose of 'Green' Urban Chic

Introducing the New Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel

By Susan Bairley

The new Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel in Williamsburg, Mich., is chic, modern and new-age comfy. With its dark and golden wood grains, brushed and polished chrome, sharp contrasts and modern lines, it's very urban chic.

As a result, it may seem a bit misplaced in Northern Michigan, where woodsy lodges and the whitewashed look of seaboard homes and architecture typically rule. Unlike its sister property, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, Turtle Creek also doesn't have its own golf courses, extensive resort amenities or spectacular northern Michigan views. But it does offer 137 stylishly appointed guest rooms, attached to a friendly, airy and attractive 54,000-square-foot casino. And to its credit, the new facility has special 'green' qualities that go beyond the color of the money wagered and won. Its many eco-friendly features, including its green planted roof, will be tallied

up in its application for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification by the U.S. Green Building Council – and that's a very good thing.

Owned and operated by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Turtle

Photo opposite page: The new Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel has 137 stylishly appointed guest rooms and 54,000-square-feet of gaming fun.

Creek is in experienced hands. The Band owns and operates Leelanau Sands Casino and Lodge in Peshawbestown, Mich., and the nearby Grand Traverse Resort in Acme. Participating in the hotel's grand opening in June, representatives of the Band blessed the ceremonies with a spiritual drumming ceremony and warmly welcomed



Photo courtesy of Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel

The new Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel in Williamsburg, Mich., officially opened in June with a ceremonial ribbon cutting at the front door of the hotel. Members of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and community business leaders participated in the ceremony.



Photo courtesy of Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel

its hometown residents and neighboring communities.

Ron Olson, chief executive officer of the Economic Development Corporation for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, said he appreciated the risk involved in opening a world-class facility amid Michigan's tough economic times, yet was confident in its success, as it adds jobs and revenue to the Michigan economy.

"We're not recession proof, but I think in-state and out-of-state travelers will find Turtle Creek to be a great destination," he said.

Turtle Creek's standard double hotel room sets a pretty high standard. While the

two beds seemed to be full-sized vs. queens, sleeping is comfortable. Glass shower stalls and earth-tone tiles surround a generous spray. A flat screen, wall-mounted TV and high-tech bedside clock accent the stylish lighting and décor. What were missing when we visited, though, were the in-room coffeemaker and a pool.

Common areas like the outdoor patio – with metal tables, chairs and red umbrellas, and the Level 3 Lounge carry a similar city-style feel.

The casino is nice, relaxing and spacious with towering sloped ceilings. And its staff is among the friendliest I've met. The approach from the hotel takes two escalators – the first brings you to a mid-level

lounge with a great view of both sides of the gaming floor; the second cascades you to the ground level.

The slots are fun and seemingly generous. My brother won \$651 on a 10-cent machine. And the payout attendant was genuinely happy for him as she counted out his winnings. ...To say the least, he'll be back!

Being a golfer and when up north, focused on recreation, I couldn't help but think how nice it would be to have an onsite golf course, pool, spa and waterside lounging. Maybe that will be part of Phase II!

For more information, visit www.casino2win.com or call 1.800.922.2WIN. **MG**

Timberstone Gets That Fifth Star Again From Golf Digest



Photo courtesy of Timberstone

Susie Fox, Director of Golf for TimberStone GC at the Pine Mountain Resort, is pumped again, as Golf Digest has awarded them their 5 Star award for a second time. Susie, who went to school with Tom Izzo and Steve Mariucchi and worked with them for 10 years on their Izzo-Mariucchi Classic. (<http://michigangolfer.tv/2004shows/show4/>) Susie has been at the course since Jerry Matthews designed the course.

Timberstone Golf Course has partnered up with Marquette's Greywalls and Harris's Sweetgrass to form a powerful trioka of courses. While many golfers from lower Michigan thought long and hard about driving to Iron Mountain to try TimberStone, they now might now make the trip to golf these terrific courses..



The new Turtle Creek Casino and Hotel features the Bourbons 72 Dining Room.