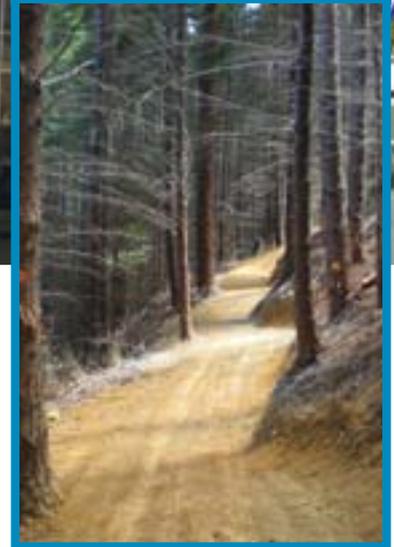


Skyline

Views



Under Construction. Skyline's new perimeter track will suit a variety of abilities.



Saddle Up!

Queenstown leads new tourism charge

Skyline's aiming to put Queenstown well and truly on a whole new tourism map if this summer's big trial goes according to plan.

By January, mountain bikers will be able to hang their machines on Skyline's gondolas for a leisurely journey up Bob's Peak, saving all their energy for a high-adrenaline downhill thrill ride.

"People have been coming to Queenstown in droves for years to try every kind of activity you can think of. Making the hill this accessible is going to open up mountain biking to a whole new group, and that means big potential increases in international visitor numbers," says manager Blair Deasy.

Making the changes means a commitment worth hundreds of thousands of dollars for Skyline Queenstown. A separate ticket window is being installed at the base building to allow riders to enter with their bikes away from visitors on foot.

An exit ramp and door is being built at the Skyline complex and specially made hooks will hold the bikes on to gondolas with two bikers sitting inside.

"It's a big investment alright, but we believe the demand's going to be there. We're essentially providing the transport component to get people on to the hill, as well as a six kilometre track for riders of differing abilities to get a feel for the terrain," says Blair. Mountain bikers have been building jumps and berms on hills

around Queenstown for years, but Bob's Peak has long been a firm favourite.

In what's become something of a legend in biking circles the track is well managed for multiple users.

Well-marked track crossings ensure bikers and trampers are aware of each other and many of the jumps and descents are well positioned for spectators.

"Mountain biking's big business all over the world and once word gets out there's a facility this good, this accessible, right in the middle of one of the planet's favourite tourism destinations, I think we can look forward to some huge numbers," says Blair.



Casino takes the lead at cup Week

Putting earthquake woes behind them for eight fabulous days of action on the Addington turf, the Christchurch crowds were determined to have a great time and the casino was there to help them in real style.

There was entertainment to suit every taste with action on the gaming floor, rocking bands and premium dining in the newly refurbished The Grand Café – designed by international award winning chef Richard Hingston.

Christchurch Casino Marketing Manager, Chad Huggett, says; "We are huge supporters of New Zealand Cup and Show Week and we always want to help make the festival as fun filled as possible!"

Known as the biggest event of the week, Christchurch Casino hosted the official pre-race festival of the New Zealand Trotting Cup Day in the casino's outdoor lounge.

"As a free event, it's a unique annual opportunity for people to rub shoulders with New Zealand's VIPs, all with a complimentary glass of Piper Heidsieck Champagne and canapés."

Bus services from Christchurch Casino to Addington Raceway meant everybody could relax and enjoy the champagne and the peppercorn dollar coin bus fare went to the Canterbury Charity Hospital Trust.

Christchurch Casino was once again the star of New Zealand Cup and Show week with the cream of the country's racing fraternity in fine form.

Rotorua goes stratospheric!

Skyline Rotorua's chalked up another world first as the countdown is on for the launch of the SkyVue Extreme 4D Spaceship.

In a NASA-like operation, Skyrides staff are tight-lipped about the actual nature of the revolutionary new attraction. Even Skyline Views, the company internal publication can't get a sneak preview but the description is enough to get anybody's heart pounding...

"Climb aboard the SkyVue Extreme 4D Spaceship and journey into an earth-shattering world of virtual reality.

"Buckle up, count down, blast off and hover over Rotorua. Then disappear at the speed of light. Discover yourself flying over the awesome beauty of New Zealand's world-renowned South Island landscapes.

"Hold on tight as SkyVue dips, turns, and swirls at extreme high speeds over majestic mountain peaks, fast-flowing rivers, long-forgotten forests, wide open tussock-lands, immeasurably deep fiords and canyons.

"Experience the deafening sound of thundering waterfalls and the crack of glaciers. Follow two jet boats as they race up a mountain stream and land on the top of a glacier in a ski-plane high in the Alps.

"Enjoy rare 3D footage of helicopters as they swoop amongst the dramatic mountain tops and meet the mysterious and majestic thar in his own mountain kingdom.

Be amazed, be educated and be astounded at the awesome beauty that comes at you from all directions, filling all your senses with wonder and delight. A ride of a lifetime, an extreme action-packed journey not to be missed, a surround-sound and vision extravaganza... once experienced, never forgotten..."

We couldn't have said it better. In fact we couldn't have said it at all. Now you know as much as us.

Rotorua mission control will be waiting, but expect to line up behind Skyline Views staff!

World cup arrives in style

Now the Webb Ellis Cup has dropped in at Skyline Rotorua, All Blacks fans can borrow the luge tag line 'once is never enough' as New Zealand aims to win its second world cup title next year.

On a balmy day in September the trophy made its way to the top of Mount Ngongotaha under the watchful eye of former All Black captain Tane Randall.

The visit was part of a Heineken road show that toured New Zealand to celebrate the start of the one-year countdown to RWC 2011.

Skyline Rotorua was the town's only tourist attraction to host the trophy and there was no shortage of excitement at its arrival.

Numerous delighted customers and excited staff got to see it in the flesh and pose for photos with a backdrop as splendid as the cup itself.

Skyline Rotorua's planning is well underway for celebrating the World Cup next year and to help visitors to feel they're a part of the tournament.

Those plans are under lock and key for the moment but watch out for the next edition of Skyline Views for more details.

Rotorua is set to host three pool games in the tournament and is looking forward to plenty of international supporters visiting in September and October 2011.

The cup, unfortunately, will be elsewhere for the duration, but fingers are crossed it'll be hanging around in New Zealand for a few years yet.



Skyline Rotorua staff (from left) Natasha Barber, Marcus Gildon, Sarang Harkare, Donna Kahukiwa, Dean Johnson, Jemma Wild and Kylie Simpson spend time with the Rugby World Cup.

Show brings out the poker aces

New Zealand Cup and Show Week is the cue for new poker players to try their hands at the game that's gaining popularity every year, and Christchurch Casino offers the perfect opportunity to learn in either low-entry tournaments or live games.

Visitors ranging from absolute beginners to world famous players rave about the down to earth Kiwi hospitality and un-intimidating experience they have at what's known as the home of New Zealand poker.

The exclusive women's poker night was a smash hit once again.

"Women's poker has been a feature at Christchurch Casino for over a year and continues to grow," says Chad.

We've seen such an increase that this year the first ever New Zealand Women's Poker Championship was held here to a sell-out crowd.

Each of the poker tournaments during Cup Week started with a free, 30-minute learn-to-play session, with demonstrations of all kinds of games on offer.

"With a fun, friendly and easy going atmosphere – we thoroughly encourage all women with an interest in the game to come in and give it a go," says Chad"



Food no gamble at new Grand Café

Christchurch Casino is thrilled to welcome guests into its newly re-furbished restaurant, The Grand Café for a taste of their exquisite menu from new kitchens manager and one of New Zealand's most accomplished cuisine gurus, Richard Hingston.

Guests were offered a different sample menu each day of Cup and Show Week with a daily selection that reflected the full a la carte menu, released soon after.



\$10,000 birthday bonanza up for grabs

With the summer holidays just around the corner and a very important 10th birthday coming up, there's a lot of action at Skycity Queenstown Casino.

The casino turns 10 years old on Tuesday, December 7 and to mark the occasion there's \$10,000 cash to be won.

The birthday promotion began in October and ends on the big day.

Weekly draws started in early November and Action Rewards cardholders can be in to win \$2,000 cash and 10 entry tickets into the grand birthday draws on December 7.

Holders can earn weekly draw tickets by gaming with their Action Rewards card.

The celebrations on the day kick off with Queenstown favourites Groova playing at Wild Thyme Bar and Restaurant from 7pm.

A complimentary piece of the delicious birthday cake goes perfectly with birthday specials including two glasses of bubbles for \$10, \$10 lunches and \$10 desserts.

Action Grand Prize Draws include a 9.30pm \$1,000 cash prize, a 10.30pm \$2,000 cash and at 11.30pm a superb \$5,000 cash up for grabs.

And customers who spend on site on the birthday have the chance to win a share of another \$2,000.

Draws for \$100 cash take place every half an hour from 6pm and every 15 minutes from 9pm with \$1,000 cash drawn at 10pm.

(Full terms and conditions are available on site.)

If you're not already an Action Rewards cardholder, you can join for free at the casino.



One sis never enough!

Recognising two long service awards in one year is one thing, but when both of them are sisters the celebrations can take a whole new turn!

Housekeeping supervisor Anne Loader (above) celebrated 30 years at the property in August.

The occasion was marked in style with a staff morning tea, followed by a private dinner for Anne and her family in the Oast House.

Skyline Chairman Ken Matthews made a point of being there to present Anne with her award.

Only a couple of months later, in October, head housekeeper Pam Gourley notched up 25 years with the company so the tea service was wheeled out again.

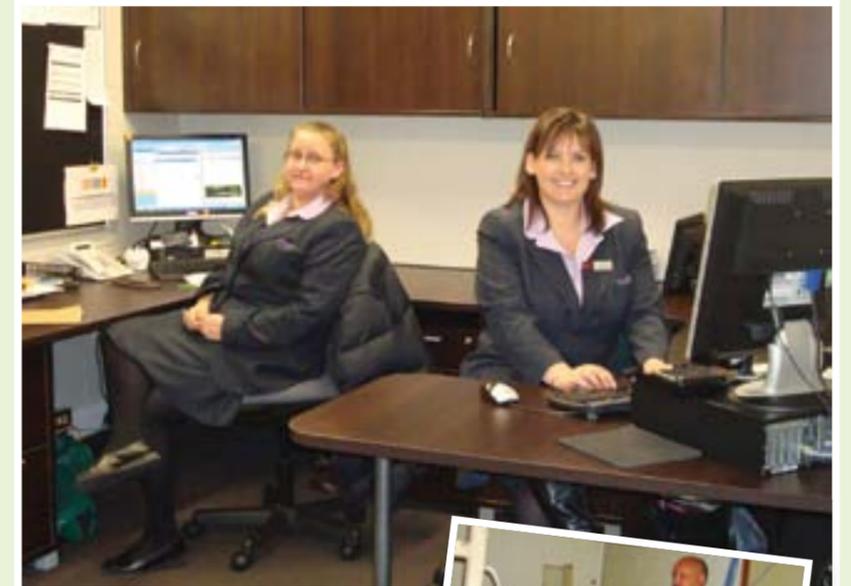
"These days it's not only unusual to have such long-serving staff but something we're all very proud of too," says manager Jan McDougall. The fact they're both sisters makes it even more remarkable," she adds.



Senior service. Skyline Chairman Ken Matthews and Leisure Lodge manager Jan McDougall record Anne's presentation for posterity.

First impressions get even better

Welsh rugby's something of a work in progress so Mercure Leisure Lodge staff were unfazed when June saw their entire front office getting a makeover in the same month the Red Dragons stayed while helping close down Carisbrook.



Before and after. Rickie Kewene surveys a work in progress and Katrina Hyde and Emma Hamilton enjoy the finished project.



Contrary to popular rumours the property didn't need the Welsh front row to knock down the walls, but builders moved in to remove partitions and put in a new ceiling, all without any disturbance to guests and only minimal inconvenience for the Leisure Lodge team.

"The biggest job was all the cabling for the computers and phones, as this was all moved from one room to another, but we now have a new room just dedicated to our server!" says front office manager Emma Hamilton. The office offers a great welcome to guests, with a new paint scheme, new lights, new desks and increased cupboard space.

There's even a heat pump to keep the team warm in winter and cool in summer, so those smiles you see are 100 per cent genuine!

Chef Ramon rings the changes

Summer has arrived at Skycity Queenstown Casino and with it comes a whole new menu at Wild Thyme Bar and Restaurant.

Talented Head Chef Ramon Smith and his team have put together a mouth-watering selection using this season's fresh flavours from locally grown produce and meats from within the region.

The inspiration behind Ramon's menu was a blend of Pacific Rim cuisine with New Zealand and Australian influences.

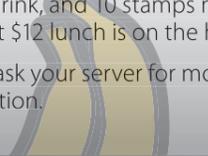


Loyalty leads to free lunch!

With the launch of this summer's menu Wild thyme has some new daily lunch specials. There are six delicious options to try including battered fish served with chunky steak fries, tandoori chicken wrap, pasta of the day, sweet corn and spring onion fritters, beef and Guinness pie and the renowned hearty BLT, all for only \$12 dollars each.

There's also the \$12 Lunch Loyalty Card which means every purchase from the \$12 lunch menu earns a stamp. The fifth stamp earns a free house drink, and 10 stamps mean the next \$12 lunch is on the house.

Simply ask your server for more information.



Basil spices up Wild Thyme!

Mayhem will rule once more as the ever-popular Faulty Towers Dinner Theatre Show returns to Skycity on Friday, December 10.

Douglas Kamo and his highly talented cast will perform at Skycity Queenstown Casino followed by live entertainment from Brett Strachan.

Tickets include a three course dinner during the show and are available now at the cashiers desk for \$65 per person, or call - 03 441 0400.



Nights out neatly packaged

A brand new range of Game Thyme Packages make the Skycity experience even easier this summer.

The premium Diamond Package offers full private use of the exclusive Summit Room for three hours, including two hours of mock gaming on two tables, a delicious selection of canapés and three house drinks per person from only \$50 a head.

For smaller groups the Hearts Package offers mock gaming on a private table for up to 10 people, with a professional dealer for one hour. It also includes a drink per person and a delicious platter to share, all for only \$220. It's a great way to learn how to play and bond with your team.

Meanwhile the Clubs Package is ideal for out-of-towners.

For only \$15.00 per head, Clubs enjoy a two-course lunch from a selected menu, tea, coffee or a soft drink and a \$2 casino voucher. Plus, depending on the number of people there may even be a rebate towards the bus hire.

And for that big night out there's the Spades package which provides a main dinner meal and two house drinks at Wild Thyme, plus gaming chips to use at the casino for only \$52 a head.

For more information on Game Thyme Packages and for full terms and conditions contact Hope Bates, Skycity's marketing and promotions coordinator on 03 441 0402 or email hope.bates@skycity.co.nz

Luge lifted by high-tech upgrade



Queenstown luge riders are enjoying smoother chairlift rides since an extensive upgrade earlier in the year.

The ride has proved so popular over the years that electrical control systems were in need of replacement.

It meant closing down the operation for the entire month of May, which allowed maintenance teams to look at other aspects of the luge too.

"Our teams not only oversaw the installation of a brand new electrical system but they also completed a major upgrade of the chairlift, updated the bottom terminal conveyors and improved 160 metres of the track," explains manager Blair Deasy.

Now the lift boasts brand spanking new touch-screen controls and a more user-friendly braking system.

"The Leitner-Poma America installation engineers, with the assistance of our in-house electrician Steve Robinson, completed their work in the very quick time of just over two weeks," explains Blair.

"The entire bottom terminal conveyor layout and system was replaced with a much more customer-friendly curved chain conveyor system, unique to Skyline," he adds.



Curves, curbs and corners give track the edge

The Queenstown luge experience is different on the track too, after a considerable track realignment project.

The overall track gradient was improved by local construction experts Beaver Contractors and Naylor's.

The work included concrete curbed edging and three additional corners were added to the advanced track.

There are also improved S-bends at the end of the ride to slow riders before entering the conveyors.

The finishing touches were added by Skyline's grounds crew who worked on the trackside, including safety fencing and barriers, service ducting and water supply.

Stiff upper lips for follicle frolics

Things have been getting hairy in Queenstown as staff got behind November.

Each year the challenge is responsible for moustaches sprouting on thousands of men's faces in New Zealand and around the world, with the sole aim of raising vital funds and awareness for men's health.

Skyline Queenstown wasn't going to be left behind so the razors went rusty and the chins went rustic.

As Skyline Views went to press competition was getting as fierce as the looks of the mean hombres at work, as everybody chased last year's 'Best Mo' winner Taika Brooks.

To enter, participants made a \$10 donation and had to ensure they were cleanly shaven on the first of November.

From then on it was a month of hard growing using whatever fertiliser came to hand.

An anonymous witness said things were getting ugly as the competition neared its close, though we think she just isn't in pursuit of the hirsute.

Watch this space in the next edition to find out who was the finest facial farmer, and more importantly, how much they raised (cash that is, not chin-crop).

Tremblant team beats the elements

Skyline's Canadian team showed some real Kiwi ingenuity and grit to record a massive 226,541 rides in a foreshortened Northern Hemisphere season.

Despite Mother Nature throwing a paddy and a grumpy electrical system packing a sad, the team made the most of the 116 operational days they had and gave customers the time of their lives at Mont Tremblant.

First challenge was a rogue bolt of lightning kissing the chairlift a little too passionately, followed by a long game of hide and seek with an electrical fault.

Seeing the whole operation brought to a standstill would have seen most teams

putting up the closed signs for the season. But not manager Danny Luke and the Tremblant terriers.

"In the face of these setbacks the team came together brilliantly and showed great resilience. On more than one occasion they kept us operating by loading luge carts onto trucks to get them back up the hill," he says.

"There was about four percent of downtime overall but 110 per cent effort from our luge rangers, they were just superb, rolling up their sleeves and getting on with it. It was like having a team full of New Zealanders on the case!" adds Danny.



Captain takes charge at Tremblant

Luge Legend Captain Gravity has reached icon status in Canada now, since the rebranding of the attraction at the beginning of the season.

Skyline's international presence keeps growing and now the artiste formerly known as 'Northsky Luge' proudly announces itself to the world as 'Skyline Luge Mont Tremblant'.

"This has always felt just like our New Zealand and Singapore luge operations but seeing the new brand and logo everywhere here really seals the deal for us. It's another great result for Skyline and excellent positioning for the company," says Danny.

Captain Gravity was last seen taking former star Mont Tremblant mascot 'Toufu' for a beer to make up for stealing the show.

CLEAN SHEET IS NO ACCIDENT

There's been some serious wastage at Mont Tremblant this year – in the last 36 days of 2010 operations the accident book's just sat there gathering dust!

"With everything that's been going on and the frenetic pace we've all been working at you'd expect someone to at least bump their heads or something. But the rangers know their jobs well enough to keep everyone out of danger," says Danny.

It's even more impressive when you take into account the job sheets for the maintenance team.

On average each luge cart was serviced 23 times throughout the season but the workshop and track staff know their staff well enough to stay out of danger too.

"They did a brilliant and safe job all summer. In fact the only danger was avoiding a paper cut when we double-checked the accident book to make sure!" adds Danny.



Island Luge stays on top

Sentosa Luge and Skyride has more broken records than a recycled music shop and the hits just keep on coming.

This year the Singapore attraction has beaten its 2009 figures for the same period by an astonishing 10 per cent, making big daily demands on the staff.

"It's now becoming a normality for the luge team to host more than 5,000 guests every weekend and over 3,000 on any weekday," says manager Lyndon Thomas.

Those numbers shot up during May, June, July and August, as tourists flocked to Singapore to visit the new integrated resorts and the island nation's new offerings.

To celebrate the success and team effort over the summer Lyndon arranged a night out for the whole staff at the Gold Glass Movies where they enjoyed an evening of pampering.

"If anyone thinks that these guys have an easy job, think again. We are faced with



capacity issues which adds to the pressure at key touch points and I thank the whole team for their continued patience and day-to-day effort as we try to solve these 'happy problems'," says Lyndon.

And there's only a short rest as the team prepares for its next big challenge.

"It's time to take a breather and start preparation for the December and January period, typically our busiest two months of the year," says Lyndon.



PM IN POLE POSITION:

Prime Minister John Key, clearly inspired by his visit to the Singapore leg of the Formula One championship, tries out his skills on Sentosa Luge. "Mr Key must be a luge fan as he and his son had five rides each!" says manager Lyndon Thomas.

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skyline.co.nz

Agents have designs on new look Blue Peaks

Travel agents are hungry for news of the ongoing Blue Peaks renovation project as word spreads around industry circles says manager Michael McMillan.

"Renovations is the keyword alright. Our lodge units are getting a fresh coat of paint and the furnishings they are a-changing!" he says, clearly fighting the urge to break into a Bob Dylan impersonation.

Co-manager Anne McMillan has an appreciative eye for the colour scheme that's moved the much-loved Queenstown accommodation property with the times.

"We've brightened the room appearance by using Resene Spanish white to replace the dated lemon colour of the walls and doors. Ceilings are the same colour now,

too. New drapes, a modern couch and bed coverings are really making a dazzling change," she says.

The upgrade is like a well-oiled machine with changes happening with strict military precision.

"It's all go in the apartments. Each week for six weeks furniture has been going out for upgrading and new fixtures coming in.

"Blinds and sheers replace drapes so they're being fitted and look much sharper. Carpets, TVs, side tables and coffee tables will all be new," says Michael.

"This is a major upgrade and Debbie Cavit, of Cavit and Co who did the original design, has put together a very smart blend of colour and tone which will complement and modernise our

apartments," says Anne who has a head for economics as well as interior know-how.

"The owners of the apartments have made a huge commitment to this project and no doubt their asset will appreciate," she adds.

Both the McMillans have been gauging guests' reactions with pleasing results, and interest out in the market place is growing rapidly.

"We're getting many positive comments from our travel agents, who are hearing about the changes from their clients and we'll be delighted to show them round when they get a chance to visit Queenstown, says Michael. "So we thought we'd use Skyline Views as the ideal place to invite them to drop in if they're passing so they can see the work first hand!" he adds.

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