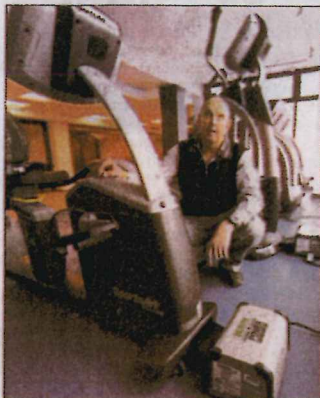


This hotel is thinking of future generations



GREEN GYM: David Pollock, who works at Hotel Verde, shows off the hotel's gym equipment. The bicycles and step machines, which were designed in Australia, generate electricity when being used.

PICTURES:
COURTESY AFRICA

MATTHEW HIRSCH

WIND turbines, geothermal heat pumps and electricity-generating gym equipment are just some of the things that make Hotel Verde the greenest hotel in Africa.

The three-star hotel is located a few hundred metres from Cape Town International Airport and was officially opened yesterday.

It boasts about 150 rooms, restaurant and conference facilities.

Other unique features of this hotel include a grey water recycling plant and lifts that generate electricity. The hotel was built with concrete slabs containing recycled materials.

Instead of a traditional air-conditioning system which uses a lot of energy, the hotel uses geothermal heat pumps attached to 100 boreholes which are drilled up to 70m in the ground.

The German company AGO Energy installed a network of pumps and pipes

which uses the earth as a heat source in winter and "heat sink" in summer, boosting efficiency and reducing operational costs.

The only water that the hotel uses from the municipality is for showers, baths and basins, while everything else, including the toilets, use recycled water. All the cold excess water is kept within the system.

The electricity generating gym experiment and wind turbines are a first of their kind for a hotel in South Africa.

Hotel director Mario Delicio said they did research for a year before construction on the hotel began.

"Compared to other places, "Africa is far behind, and you can see what kind of damage is done to the environment. At the end of the day... we have a certain responsibility towards future generations."

The hotel cost about R20 million more than a normal hotel, but they are confident that they will make the



NEW LOOK: The reception of Hotel Verde, which was officially opened yesterday. The hotel was built with concrete slabs containing recycled materials.

money back between 10 and 15 years. Prices for rooms cost about R900 a night.

Alan Winde, the Western

Cape MEC of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, who opened the hotel yesterday, said he hoped

more members of the hospitality sector would embrace the innovations. - Cadet News Agency