

Tamarack Lodge opens today at Heavenly Mountain Resort

By Kathryn Reed

Something dramatically different is in store for skiers at Heavenly Mountain Resort today – the first new lodge in 30 years at the South Shore resort is open.

With 40-foot windows giving expansive views to the slopes and an interior that barely feels like you've left the woods, the multi-million dollar Tamarack Lodge is ready for hungry skiers.

Inside the 9,150 Bar are round wooden tables made from trees that had been removed a few years ago when the Olympic lift was reconfigured. The resort kept the trees on site just in case they'd have a future use.



The 9,150 Bar at the Tamarack Lodge has tables made from trees cut at the resort.
Photo/Provided

Blaise Carrig, co-president of Vail Resorts Mountain Division and one-time COO at Heavenly, said he got the idea for the

tables from having seen a similar design at the Manzanita restaurant at the Ritz-Carlton at Northstar.

Sixteen of those tables are scattered about the bar – which got its name from the elevation of where it sits.

The lodge's name is from the six-pack chairlift – Tamarack – that is just steps from the lodge.

With the moisture lasting into early summer, the lodge was almost scrapped this building season. But the builder – SMC Contractors – convinced resort officials it could have everything done by February. Clearly, they finished well ahead of schedule.

“Heavenly gave us the resources we needed to work at an accelerated schedule,” Joe Stewart with SMC told *Lake Tahoe News*. This included providing snowcats and snowmobiles for workers to get to the job site once the snow started to fall.

Stewart also credits the planning of the project for his crews to be able to do their job.



Lots of seating and natural light at the new lodge.

Photo/Provided

He is extremely complimentary of Carrig's interior design savvy. And Carrig returns the compliment to Stewart and his

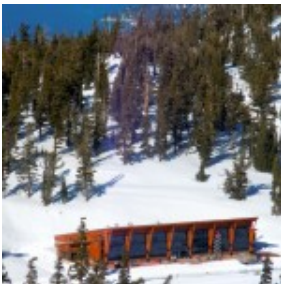
team.

Carrig has an eye for such endeavors, having designed two of his houses – inside and outside. He did some substantial design work for previous employers at Sugar Bush and the Canyons.

“Back in the day when I was a ski patrol director, in the summertime I had a small building business,” Carrig told *Lake Tahoe News*. “At that time we specialized in old Vermont architecture style, like old farm houses.”

Part of what he wanted for the Tamarack Lodge was for it to have a comfortable lodge feel even though the windows are high and the room wide-open.

With painting the sheet rock red and then putting Douglas fir planks horizontally on the wall with 2-inch gaps in between so the red shows through, it gives the room some depth. Plus, the black bolts give it a more of rustic feel.



The Tamarack
Lodge from the
slopes of
Heavenly.

Photo/Kathryn
Reed

“Large chandeliers also anchor the ceiling and make the room feel smaller than it is,” Carrig said.

Carrig’s fingerprints are all over the lodge. He was working

hand-in-hand with the architect – right down to the bar tops, bar features and tile for the bathrooms.

For the oversized restrooms with numerous stalls Carrig selected large square natural curly tiles.

This lodge near the top of the gondola finally gives skiers a place to escape the elements – which for this weekend will be a welcome change if the forecast holds.

Five themed food stations are available, with 500 indoor seats and 250 outdoor.

Heavenly's master plan calls for two more lodges – Powder Bowl and Sand Dunes. Construction dates have not been set for either one. East Peak Lodge is the last dining facility to open at Heavenly – that was 1970.

“The company is really proud of this,” Carrig said of Tamarak the day before it officially opened. “Heavenly definitely needed to have a really comfortable lodge.”