

Green's the Dream

It didn't seem possible, but five years had passed since Tyla purchased the Lakeway Resort. She and her staff had accomplished so much in their goal to achieve sustainability, yet there was much more to be done.

When Lakeway had come on the market for sale, Tyla jumped at the chance to buy it based on positive recommendations from her accountant and close friends in the tourism business. She had vacationed at the resort with her family since early childhood and would return anytime her hectic career had allowed. The peace and tranquility of the resort in its pristine location along with numerous water and winter sports activities made it an ideal getaway destination.

Stepping away from a successful career in the hotel industry was a major life change, but she never regretted her decision. Lakeway Resort had been well-maintained, and the 40 cabins clustered on 21 acres had been thoughtfully placed to take full advantage of the natural setting.

As soon as Tyla signed the papers and took possession, she began to make changes that would lead to creating a sustainable operation. Long before people talked about carbon footprints or LED lightbulbs were the norm, earth-friendly decisions were being implemented throughout the resort. The small rental fleet of outboard-motor fishing boats had been replaced with kayaks and rowboats. All disposable service ware and cups had been eliminated; linens were now changed only at guests' request regardless of the length of their stays; no pesticides were in use; and the laundry used only recycled water and biodegradable detergents. Through wise purchasing decisions and an extensive recycling and composting program, waste had been reduced to a minimum.

In addition to implementing numerous environmentally friendly programs, Tyla had worked with neighboring property owners to improve wildlife habitat as well as creating trails with numerous wildlife viewing venues. She was also committed to hiring all of her employees from the local community and always selected local contractors when she needed to pay for additional services so her spending would multiply in



An Asian tour group admires renaissance statues in Florence's Piazza della Signoria.

Photo by Thomas Sun