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Napa Valley Home to First LEED Gold Hotel

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Wen-I Chang, founder and president of Atman Hospitality Group, announced that the company's Gaia Napa Valley Hotel & Spa has received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The hotel is the first in the United States to achieve this level of certification.

The 132-room property, located here in American Canyon, opened last October. It sits on 4.6 acres and includes green touches such as chemical-free landscaping; 100 percent recycled tile; a guest van that uses alternative fuel; waterless urinals; plates on guestroom doors that include the name of a wild animal, bird or flower; and scrap metal and recycled wood incorporated into the exterior design.

Inside the lobby is a real-time display of how much energy hotel is using and saving, moment by moment--along with the energy contribution from the solar panels on the roof. Two swans populate a pond in the center courtyard, while guests lounge in 132 rooms painted with special, low-VOC paints, recycled carpets, and energy-saving air conditioners and heaters that use 15 percent less energy. Behind the walls, all the wood used in construction was certified as new growth wood.

The hotel received LEED points for actions including: providing bicycle storage and changing rooms, storm water management and treatment, water use reduction, green power, use of renewable energy, use or recycled content in building materials, and use of local/regional materials.

The estimated value of the hotel is \$20 million. Architects are Todd Jersey and Mickey Muenning. Covenant Construction in Clovis, Calif. was the builder. The name Gaia refers to Mother Earth in Greek mythology. The hotel is independently owned, not a franchise, and is managed by Sausalito, Calif.-based Marin Management Inc.

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