



AGUA CALIENTE CASINO

RANCHO MIRAGE

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Contact: Therese Everett-Kerley
Public Relations Specialist
t. 760-883-1396 / c. 760-219-3885

MEET THE “COOLEST” MAN IN THE DESERT: EXECUTIVE CHEF & ICE SCULPTOR: TIM WILCOX

Rancho Mirage, Ca (June 4, 2007) – As the mercury climbs above the century mark here in the desert, there is one man who keeps his cool; he is Executive Chef Tim Wilcox at Agua Caliente Casino, the man who transforms blocks of ice into some very “cool” art.

It's usually around sunset (when the rest of us seek refuge from the heat) that Chef Tim emerges from the casino kitchen and heads to the outdoor loading dock—his makeshift art studio.

Armed with two chainsaws, a grinder, ice picks and home-made chisel tools, Chef Tim carefully begins his assault on a 300-pound block of ice.

Chef Tim says there are four basic steps to professional ice carving. The first is “marking” a pattern or cutting guide in the ice. Working from a rough sketch he's made, it takes Chef Tim only moments to mark his vision in the ice.

The second, and most difficult step according to Chef Tim, is “facing” whereby the largest portions of ice are sheared off through long, deep cuts in the block. Chainsaw in hand, Chef Tim quips “this is an excellent way to release stress.”

The third and fourth steps in ice carving are the “shaping” and “detail.” This is where the block of ice comes alive, in this case, as an icy dragon with flaring nostrils and dozens of slippery scales. For Chef Tim, the whole process takes only about an hour and is worth the hard work. “I really love what I do and I'm so happy to be working for an organization that allows me to be creative and run with my ideas.”

Chef Tim has been honing his ice carving skills for 21 years, since an ice carving apprenticeship at a hotel in Tucson, Arizona. He says he's learned a lot of tricks along the way, one of which he calls the “secret 5th step” which is carving handles at the base of the sculpture so you can pick it up when you're done. Chef Tim says he learned that lesson the hard way, after “decapitating” an ice swan the morning of a Mother's Day brunch.

You can find Chef Tim's ice sculptures displayed in the Grand Palms Buffet at Agua Caliente Casino on most holidays and special occasions; his fine menu creations are available 7 days a week!

Agua Caliente Casino is located at 32-250 Bob Hope Drive in Rancho Mirage, California; home to 1,000 slots, 49 table games, daily Bingo and an 11-table poker room voted “Best in the Valley” in a 2007 readers' poll. The casino offers exciting entertainment in the Canyons Lounge & Cahuilla showroom, plus savory dining options at the Steakhouse, Sage Bar and Grill, Grand Palms Buffet and Desert Eatery Food court. In March 2008, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians will open a new 16-story, 340-room luxury hotel beside the casino, making Agua Caliente Casino a destination of choice. Guests will be able to stay in style at the hotel which will feature deluxe rooms and suites, a luxury spa, pool and cabana complex, as well as a state-of-the-art business/conference center. For more details, call the Agua Caliente Casino Information Line: 888.999.1995, or visit the web site at www.HotWaterCasino.com.

Agua Caliente Casino is owned and operated by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.