

Photos of Whistler snow beamed to Turin's denim-blue B.C. Place

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As the sun rose above snowy Whistler Mountain yesterday morning, Economic Development Minister Colin Hansen hosted the official opening of B.C.-Canada Place in Turin, Italy.

The spectacular B.C. sunrise was broadcast live on huge television screens in the log home that was built in 100 Mile House and set up in Turin's Piazzale Valdo Fusi.

Hansen said at least 500 people showed up for the official opening.

"We started the reception at 5:30 [Sunday night], which was just as sunlight was breaking over Whistler Mountain and as the reception progressed we could watch the sun rise and see how much tremendous snow there is at Whistler," said Hansen from Turin yesterday.

"Fast forward that four years and that's going to be our Olympic games opening."

The \$6-million, 6,500-square-foot pavilion combines the log home and an existing glass-and-metal exhibition hall and will showcase 80 B.C. busi-

nesses, tourism, cultural opportunities and the 2010 Olympics.

B.C.-Canada Place is in a prime location just 90 metres from the building where up to 8,000 unaccredited international media will be based and sits between the city's train station and the Olympics medal plaza.

"It's not just to visitors coming to the Olympics," said Hansen.

"It's actually about the ability for us to tap into the world media that are going to be here for the Olympics."

He said there's huge value in promoting B.C. at the Games, which take place from Feb. 10 to 26.

"We're talking about millions of dollars of promotional value," he said.

The two-storey log home, built by Sitka Log Homes, is built entirely with beetle-killed B.C. pine trees — between 80 and 140 years old.

"We are showcasing the denim-blue wood from British Columbia," said Hansen.

"This entire log house was built with pine logs that had already died. It's a case of using a resource in a very attractive way."

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