

Horseshoe Resort sold to Israeli developer. Mishorim paying about \$38 million for popular ski destination:

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Horseshoe Resort, the popular ski destination for families in Ontario, has been sold to an Israeli investment company, the *Star* has learned.

In a deal scheduled to close later this month, the resort, which features ski hills, golf courses, a hotel, conference centre and spa, will be sold to Mishorim Development Group Ltd., a publicly listed company on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

Sources say the privately owned resort an hour drive north of Toronto sold in the \$38 million range. The original list price for the resort was \$100 million, but Mishorim is not purchasing the entire 400-hectare property, according to sources. The deal includes the resort and all facilities, but does not include the single-family residential lots surrounding the property. Mishorim has an option to purchase the lots at a later date.

The chair of Mishorim Group is Canadian Gil Blutrigh, whose Canadian based Skyline International Development Inc., of which he is president, is already a major investor in the area.

Blutrigh, who was not available for comment yesterday, has already made waves in resort country by buying much of the nearby town of Port McNicoll on Georgian Bay for a reported \$100 million.

Blutrigh has purchased 325 hectares of harbour and waterfront lands and is building a luxury development in the area.

Skyline has been on a tear since he arrived in Toronto from Israel in 1997.

Last year, it purchased developer Harry Stinson's Sapphire Tower site in downtown Toronto for \$24.1 million. It has also been busy building the Pantages Suites Hotel and the Cosmopolitan hotel in the city's core.

The combination of Port McNicoll on the water and the ski hills of Horseshoe valley is a powerful one, said Curtis Gallagher, vice-president of hotel investment for CB Richard Ellis Hotels.

"I think there is great synergy to be had – you have great summer recreation and great winter recreation."

Gallagher, the listing broker for the property, would not reveal details of the sale.

Mishorim is buying the resort at the height of the recreational property market. A report by ReMax Ontario Atlantic Canada this month said sales in cottage country had flatlined or decreased as a result of economic uncertainty in Ontario.

However, Gallagher said "desirable, top-quality properties will continue to do well. The cream rises to the top."

Potential buyers who don't want to spend a lot of money on a cottage and are looking for a lower-maintenance lifestyle are attracted to resorts such as Horseshoe, Gallagher said.