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AT HOME ON THE RANGE

TRAILHEAD SPA AT BRUSH
CREEK RANCH (SARATOGA, WY)



Like the rest of the Ranch,
the spa's decor was
inspired by the Western
landscape that surrounds it.





Spa-goers get a taste of Western-style hospitality at this authentic all-inclusive guest ranch.

★ Written by Nanci McArdle



estled among 13,000 acres in south central Wyoming's North Platte River Valley, Brush Creek Ranch has been a fully operating homestead ranch since the 1880s. When the property went up for sale in 2008, Bruce White, the founder, chairman, and CEO of White Lodging, a developer, owner, and manager of hotel brands, quickly snatched it up. White originally purchased the land to serve as a family sanctuary and a place to hold charity functions, but he soon realized he had the perfect opportunity to share this authentic taste of the Wild West with others. Opened to the public in July 2010, the property, which is still set amid a working ranch, offers tailored, customizable, and all-inclusive adventure experiences for corporate, family, and group retreats. The resort features a 38,000-square-foot lodge; a total of 37 cabins, suites, and rooms that can accommodate up to 125 guests; a variety of culinary options; and an activity program offering something for everyone, including fly fishing in the nearby lakes, game hunting on private land, equestrian riding, a bow and gun club, rodeo lessons, and bull fighting, as well as more traditional activities such as basketball, horseshoes, and golf. But those looking for a more relaxing kind of adventure will find it at the **Trailhead Spa**, the ranch's most recent addition. Opened last fall, the spa was built as a respite for guests after a long day on the range. "Trailhead Spa is the perfect place for people to discover a sense of peace and relaxation after a day of connecting with nature," says executive vice president and COO Mike Williams.

continued on page 84



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continued from page 83

Just like the resort, the spa also embraces the spirit of the West. “The decor of our spa is calming and relaxing, using earth tones, clean lines of natural slate, and floor-to-ceiling windows, so guests still feel the sense of the property,” says spa director Stacey Kerns. “The design allows the inside elements to mirror the outside of the entire western landscape of this beautiful Wyoming ranch.”

Western influences also play an important role in the treatment menu, which was created by Kerns. “We wanted to keep the menu simple, yet offer the most quality in each service,” she says. In addition to the popular Brush Creek Ranch Signature Massage (starting at \$145, 50 minutes; starting at \$165, 80 minutes), which is tailored to each client’s individual needs, the menu offers more unique treatments that reflect the area. For example, the Cowboy’s Facial (\$145, 50 minutes), which is specifically for men, includes the application of eucalyptus oil-infused towels to open the pores, a self-heating mud that is applied to the spine to offer relief after a day in the saddle, and a hand and foot massage with warm mitts. Another favorite is the Spirit Journey (\$185, 80 minutes), a Native American poultice ritual that begins with a dry-brushing of the skin, a massage using warm essential oils, and an application of a lavender and sea salt compress to release tension in the muscles.

Kerns says her staff of three full- and three part-time employees can accommodate up to 125 clients a day, and she occasionally brings in on-call therapists as

continued on page 86



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: In addition to spa-ing, guests have a variety of adventurous options to keep them busy, such as the Horsemanship Program; the Ranch is located on 13,000 spacious acres and borders one million acres of federal wild lands; windows and doors throughout the spa allow guests to enjoy the scenery.





PICTURED: Group yoga classes are offered on Falcon Peak Overlook, where guests get an amazing view of the natural surroundings. BELOW: Spa-goers also have the option of having treatments performed in the spa's separate yurt.

continued from page 84

needed. And although there are only two treatment rooms, there are plenty of other areas of the spa facility for guests to relax and rejuvenate, including the unisex steam room and sauna, and the full-service salon. There are also several outdoor areas that allow spa-goers to enjoy nature, such as the hot tub, the yurt, and Falcon Peak Overlook, where yoga classes take place. But hands down, the most sought-after area of the spa is the outdoor teepee, where guests can opt for a variety of services. It is especially popular for couples' treatments, such as the Couples' Massage Teepee Experience including Smudging Ritual (\$370, 50 minutes; \$410, 80 minutes), in which couples get an authentic taste of Native American-inspired wellness designed to calm and cleanse the soul.

Because the entire property is eco-conscious, it goes without saying the spa is, as well. "The ranch has the philosophy of responsible conservation," says Kerns. "The entire lodge and spa are enveloped by the natural landscape of the Sierra Madre and Medicine Bow National Forests, so we make sure to carefully keep the pristine layout of the rolling scrub of sage, Indian paint brush, lupine, pine trees, and mountains intact. As for the spa, all of our linens are laundered in our eco-friendly laundry facility, all of our products are 90 percent water soluble, and 90 percent of the working instruments we use are disinfected, sterilized, and reused."

Although in its infancy, the spa has been well received, says Kerns. "We have been seeing a lot of men, women, and families escaping the hustle and bustle of the corporate lifestyle to enjoy a moment of tranquility and reconnecting with one another," she says. "This spa is the right size for everyone on every comfort level." Right now, Kerns's main focus is on customer service. Because the resort's primary guests are large groups, she is hoping many guests will return on a regular basis. "My goal is to build a rapport for each new guest, and hopefully see them year after year." ■



**TRAILHEAD SPA
AT BRUSH
CREEK RANCH**
(Saratoga, WY)

OWNERS: Beth and
Bruce White

SPA DIRECTOR:
Stacey Kerns

OPENED: September 2010

CLIENT BASE

70% female
30% male

SPACE

13,000 square feet;
2 treatment rooms

OFFERINGS

body treatments,
couples' treatments,
facials, fitness, hair and
scalp treatments, hand
and foot treatments,
fitness, makeup
application, massage,
nailcare, Pilates,
prenatal services,
salon services,
waxing, yoga

**SIGNATURE
SERVICE**

Brush Creek Ranch
Signature Massage
(starting at \$145, 50
minutes; starting at
\$165, 80 minutes)

**MOST EXPENSIVE
OFFERING**

Secluded Yurt
Experience (\$590),
which includes a
snowmobile or
horseback ride to a
private chef's lunch
or dinner for two
and a 50-minute
Couples' Massage
in a private yurt

PRODUCTS

Agera Spa Comfort,
Aquage, Biotone,
Colorado Clothing
Co., CND, Phytomer,
SkinCeuticals,
SpaRitual

EQUIPMENT

European Touch,
Oakworks

**ARCHITECT
AND INTERIOR
DESIGNER**

Simeone Deary Design
Group (Chicago)