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A Day in the Life: Montana Kayakers

Day Spa Getaways - Following the Bliss

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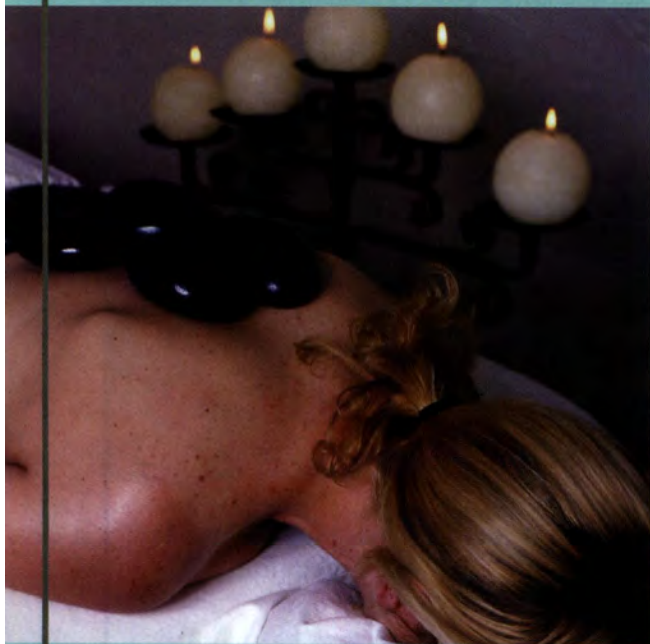
the resource guide to big sky country

Bozeman . Big Sky . Livingston . Yellowstone

DAYS P A G E T A W A Y S

By Cynthia Logan

f o l l o w i n g t h e b l i s s



Photos by Michael Blevins

You are here. Whether planted permanently, double-parked, or just visiting, you've already gotten away—fresh, unpolluted air and wide-open spaces are a luxury in today's crowded, fast-paced world. But even in such a stunning setting, stress accumulates, the cold gets old, and the dry climate wreaks havoc with your skin. Playing too hard can be as stressful as not playing enough. Fortunately, our area boasts not only the splendor of Nature, but beauty and pampering facilities to rival even big city spas. You can soak sore muscles, enjoy massages, manicures, pedicures, facials, and exotic body wraps—even relax on a soothing state-of-the-art sonic water table. And there's no need to lose that tan or envy bronzed bodies—we've got the latest techniques to keep you going and glowing. For up-to-the-minute information, we sent an intrepid investigator out to sample local treatment fare. Good news: it's delicious, good for you, and there's plenty of variety. Whether you've got an extra hour (even 15 minutes!), an afternoon off, or the chance for a weekend retreat, take time to care for yourself, relax, renew, and rejuvenate body, mind, and spirit. It isn't just indulgence: Everyone around you will reap the benefits. Come along as we make our way from Big Sky to the Paradise Valley, detouring to some of the best spas in our West!

If you've just arrived, speed up elevation adjustment with a "High Altitude Salt Glow" in Big Sky's Moonlight Spa. Ancient sea salt sloughs off modern city cares, while rosemary and mint open nasal passages. Or settle into a soothing, hot, bubbly Seafoam Mud Cocoon that actively tingles, detoxifying, oxygenating, and re-mineralizing you. A moisturizing marine cream massage completes the treatment. You'll hit the slopes or the trails healthier and more hydrated. Should you overdo, come back for Skier's Rescue or Mountain

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Bliss. If your visit is more pleasure than business, consider the Couples' Massage, topped off with a honey foot scrub. Afterward, who knows? You just may go dancing in the Moonlight....

Or over to Solace, located off the Huntley Shoshone Lobby. Here you can indulge in a Co-enzyme Q10 Facial before facing a business conference. On a break? Sneak off for a Rose Wrap (Exfoliate first with ground olive stones, then drench yourself in rose body gel.), or go for the Mineral Salt Glow before heading towards Bozeman. Be sure to pull over when you see the blue school bus on your left, because it's a sure sign you've found—

A jewel in the Treasure State—Bozeman Hot Springs offers a fitness center as well as superb spa services that include such specialties as the Quench Facial, an Aqua-lift Masque, Chocolate Raspberry Truffle body treatment, and myriad massages. Walking through glass doors, you're greeted by a smiling employee and subtle aromatherapy; the comfortable waiting room is arched and elegant. A glass of lemon/cucumber water hydrates, clearing the mind. Choose from a scrumptious menu that includes hot rock or pregnancy massage, reflexology, cranio-sacral therapy, self-heating mud or violet clay treatments, a lavender body wrap, or the "Chromalift" from Phytobiodermie, the "Innovation" prize-winning Swiss skin care company specializing in color energy treatments for the face and body. There's even a Gentlemen's facial "designed uniquely for a man's skin." Each treatment includes a complimentary "swim." Ten mineral-rich pools range in temperature from ice-cold to hot-as-you-can-handle and are emptied and refilled daily. And you really can swim laps in the largest of the nine indoor pools! The Sahara Sauna and Amazon Rain Forest wrap you in warmth that lasts for hours. If you're on a budget, the springs, steam, and sauna cost just \$6.50. Owners Larissa and Dennis Simpson have expansion plans this spring that will make the Bozeman Hot Springs a true destination spa facility.

Hitting the gym or heading towards Four Corners? Stop by Spa Ridge at the Ridge Athletic Club and enjoy. Prices are the same for members and non-members. The guiding philosophy here is that true health emerges when we



adopt practices that embrace and nourish both mind and body. You're invited "to discover the difference that this holistic approach makes." A simple, yet sophisticated décor, coupled with lush terry robes and matching slippers (just your size!), a Japanese-sized cup of tea, a comfortable seat next to the fireplace, and a heated neck wrap get your visit off to a cozy start. Put your feet up—there's a vibrating footstool that makes you wish the wait were a bit longer. But soon you're ushered into one of the treatment rooms and, well, treated, in both senses of the word. Assistant Director Catrina Lofgren says the goal at Spa Ridge was to hire "career therapists" since much of their clientele is referred by the medical community. Services include massage, facials, facial peels, acupuncture, body treatments, hair removal, gel or French nails, and "mind/body" packages. Massage pricing can be broken into 15-minute increments, convenient after a workout or between errands for that nagging neck, shoulder, or back ache. A unique offering is the Arnica Sports Wrap, especially good for sprained or strained muscles. Choose handmade, organic skin care products from either E'minence of Hungary or "chirally correct" cosmetics from CosMedix.

Just off Main on South Willson in Bozeman, look into Visage. At first glance, you might think it's an attractive retail storefront. And it is. Venture in, though, and you'll see that it's much more. Owner June Kaiser has blended Studio One, which offers hair and salon services, with a full-on day spa. The elevated, creamy leather pedicure stations are reminiscent of old-fashioned shoeshine stands, comfortable for both client and attendee. Positioned between the spa and the salon, you'll enjoy soothing music wafting into the room as your feet are soaked and heels pumiced. (Montana law disallows the use of harsh scrapers.) You won't be wrinkling your nose at toxic smells—chemically sensitive herself, Kaiser is mindful of product scents, and aware that relaxed employees provide the excellent results clients have come to expect. A "holistic aesthetician", she's not shy about promoting her facials; she'll let you know hers are the best in town! Also consider microdermabrasion or a "mini makeover." Visage/Studio One is responsible for calming and beautifying many a bride-to-be and her



bridesmaids, as well as nervous, excited prom dates. Six outstanding skin care lines fill front office shelves, including the pricey, but effective clinical DDS and Vivant. Visage hopes to offer anti-cellulite wraps in the near future.

Bridal parties also frequent Montana Bodycare Salon and Day Spa (just around the corner from Smilers, a new Thai restaurant). A local favorite is the Honey Milk Hydrating Treatment. "Currently the most popular spa treatment in the country," according to therapist Ashley Walker. This yummy concoction is administered in stages. After a "salt glow", which is gently pummeled off with seven Vichy showerheads while you're still horizontal, warmed honey is massaged in. Walker deviates from treatment protocol slightly to enhance the experience. "Drizzling just one part of the body at a time instead of putting it on all at once keeps the honey warm longer," she says. While you're soaking in the moisture, warmed whole milk is poured over the honey and massaged in; then, another Vichy spray and you're ready for any occasion, even if it's just back to work! Algae wraps, sculpting, firming body masks, and the Moor Mud Wrap are also popular, as is the Cellulite Reduction massage. The Aroma Plasty facial, made from an all-natural multivitamin complex, revitalizes and rejuvenates dry skin. Younger patrons benefit from the opposite end of the spectrum; the Regulating Acne Treatment tames overactive teenaged skin.

Speaking of skin, it's time to tan, and without the damaging effects of the sun. Essence of Bozeman is located towards the east end of Mendenhall, a block north of Main. Owner Jill Blevins radiates her product and service and explains the procedure thoroughly before you begin. "This is a healthy way to get some color, and is approved by the FDA, even for previous cancer patients," she mentions. Choose a clear or bronzing solution, then one of three "intensity" levels; step into a Magic Tan cubicle and shower yourself with a 45-second spray of that luscious color. The key ingredient combines with proteins in the top layer of your skin to give you a tawny tone that lasts nearly a week and can be enhanced or

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essence spa offers private Sunless Spray Tanning in their state of the art Magic Tan[®] booth. This cutting edge machine features 27 spray heads and a computer controlled leveling system that offers a choice of six exclusively designed tans. Their specially formulated solution contains pharmaceutical grade DHA, as well as nourishing moisturizers and aloe that revitalize and smooth the skin, instantly improving its appearance. This simple and quick experience offers the most natural looking and healthy tan available for any skin type.



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rejuvenate

Moonlight Spa photo by Michael Blevins

style

extended with companion products (available at Essence). After the initial session, the entire process takes about 10 minutes and is always completely private, so no excuses for the shy or hurried. Why not book your salon appointment at Hot Shots, since you'll be passing through the salon to find your Essence?

Moving east down Main Street (restaurant landmarks include Montana Ale Works), visit Pacifica, a name synonymous with high-quality scented candles and face and body-care products. Local owner Kimberli Harvey, the sister of founder Brook Harvey-Taylor, stresses Pacifica's focus on teaching people how to care for their skin.



"Many active women between 30 and 40 have sun damage and are looking for a simple skin care routine and reasonably priced products—people come to Pacifica because of the products," says Harvey, who hopes to sponsor a seminar in May on "Beauty From The Inside Out." Though Pacifica Natural Skincare products and treatments are primarily for your face, your body certainly won't be neglected. How does a Deep Ocean Purification Seaweed and Sugar Body Wrap sound? What about an Apple Pumpkin Intensive Back Facial? One can never be overly pampered during pregnancy, so for moms-to-be there's a Jasmine Prenatal Chi Massage. Midwives around the world have used jasmine for centuries to relax and deeply nurture women during this special time.

Keep heading east to Paradise Valley and you'll find Chico Hot Springs, which has drawn residents and visitors for decades. The fabulous restaurant is reason enough for a special trip, but the recently renovated Chico Day Spa makes it almost imperative. Located at the base of Emigrant Peak with a fabulous view of the Valley, the spa specializes in Geothermal Hot Rock Therapy. Handpicked stones from the Yellowstone River relieve deep muscle tension and calm nerves. Cool, polished marble stones reduce inflammation; the combination provides powerful healing, according to manager Missy Fladland, who says the team of five massage therapists also offers invigorating, deep tissue, Swedish, or lymphatic drainage modalities. "We cater to our customers on a personal level," she states. "It's a laid back, high-end spa." Summer sessions are conducted outdoors in a teepee.

About three miles south you'll encounter The Spa at Golden Ratio. Owner John Fanuzzi was a pioneering force in the development of the spa industry, manufacturing the renowned Golden Ratio massage tables. Golden Ratio River Ranch now includes a production and retail center for Golden Ratio Woodworks, the Four Winds Gift Store, the Wellspring Institute (a mini-convention center), the Wellness and Fitness Center and The Spa, which

features curved walls and rounded corners. One of the first to develop "wet" tables (waterproof, with a removable mattress and a drain, they facilitate wraps, exfoliation and other "messy" treatments), Fanuzzi's latest breakthroughs are the "Mermaid" and the "Acoustical", both of which conduct sound through the table. Start your visit lying on the water-filled Mermaid, wrapped in steaming cotton sheets "hydrocated" with purifying or nurturing herbs. Rock gently to musical tones, then move to a room infused with the scent of an aromatherapy candle and equipped with the Acoustical table. Enjoy Vibrational Attunement Massage (VAM), a technique that employs musical interactive touch techniques to enhance sounds transmitted through the table directly into your body. "Musical vibration speaks to parts of you that words are unable to reach," says therapist Sherrie Cameron. VAM not only increases vitality and improves circulation, but can also release "stress-induced cellular memories." Guests have raved: "Absolute Melt-Down Time" and "Exciting Dance With My Spirit." In addition to mud and seaweed wraps, The Spa at Golden Ratio also offers a Bioelectric Facelift, Foot Zone Therapy, Polarity and Cranio-Sacral Therapy, and the "Raindrop" Technique. What really sets this place apart, though, is the Ayurvedic Body Samadhi and Abhayanga treatments, techniques from India rarely found in traditional form. Wellness programs (cleansing diets and supervised fasting), as well as chiropractic, acupuncture, and homeopathic treatments are also available. Spend the night or the week; guest rooms are comfortable and attractive. Packages for retreats, parties, weddings, and other special events are available and clients receive a 10-15% discount for overnight or weekend stays. Added perk: Treatments come with complimentary passes to Chico Hot Springs.

U-Turn. Townsend, a small town on the way to Helena, hosts The Canyon Ferry Mansion, a bed and breakfast that pampers locals as well as guests with a surprisingly delightful spa situated alongside Warm Spring Creek. Two jacuzzis, an oversized deep-soaking tub, a hot tub, a sauna, and a steam room with a "waterfall jet seat" ease soreness accrued during horseback riding or on the Lazy Float Trip. Paraffin hand and foot dips warm and soften extremities, while cucumber eye-packs soothe and de-puff. Massage tailored to cancer patients complements the hot rock, deep tissue, and prenatal modalities. Add vertical light tanning and "makeup on call" and you've got elegance at the edge of the wilderness. Co-owner and Bridal Concierge Sandy Rose claims Canyon Ferry Mansion is an elopement paradise, and is often frequented as such.

We could go on and on... Montana's quality lifestyle thrives on service businesses. So whether you have minutes, hours, or days, our area's excellent selection of day spas and services should help you find the bliss.



Cynthia Logan started a school newspaper in sixth grade and has been writing ever since. Her feature articles and interview/profiles have appeared in regional, national, and international publications. She lives in Bozeman with her son, Ryan (who won't pick up a pen), and their cockatiel, Aimee (who shows serious potential with a pen).