

Westglow Resort & Spa's Relaxation Lounge overlooks John's River Gorge.



Where to Spa

Take relaxation beyond spectacular scenery and deluxe accommodations.

by Nan Chase

Light as a feather, the white Greek Revival mansion at Westglow Resort & Spa in Blowing Rock seems to float over the very crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. On every side waves of densely wooded mountains ripple away into the distance, their subtle colors changing by the hour, and the loudest sound is a whisper of breeze.

Breathe deeply, relax, and think of

this superb vista as the first part of a therapeutic spa visit, where every aspect — treatments, meals, lodging — plays on the theme of freshness. A light touch is everything, yet a recent multimillion-dollar restoration adds golden highlights at every turn.

There's good reason the intimate Westglow just earned the world's Best Boutique Spa title in SpaFinder's 15th annual readers' choice awards, and

took 7th place in *Travel + Leisure* magazine's Top 15 Destination Spas in 2006. A staff-to-guest ratio of 3 to 1 ensures seamless care. Westglow has become a destination in itself, apart from other High Country charms.

"It is extremely rewarding to watch our guests' transformation from when they arrive tired and stressed, to when they leave, rested and rejuvenated," says owner Bonnie Schaefer.

COURTESY OF RICHARD RUDISILL

Partner Jamie Schaefer adds, "We have been blessed with the ability to restore a historic landmark that also happens to bring so much pleasure and serenity to its guests."

The gleaming 1916 mansion holds luxurious guest rooms, quiet dining, and reception rooms, and a serene, sun-drenched library. The Life Enrichment Center, with its spacious new Relaxation Lounge a virtual cathedral of light overlooking John's River Gorge, houses treatment rooms, a full-service salon, gym and weight room, heated pools, and a delectable spa dining area. Hiking trails beckon just steps away.

Life enrichment at Westglow means not just facials and massage, but a whole-life approach that embraces cooking and nutrition instruction, fitness assessment, and beginning this month, corporate burnout retreats.

224 Westglow Circle, Blowing Rock;
828-295-4463, westglow.com

OTHER SPA OPPORTUNITIES

7th Heaven Spa at Crestwood

Tucked away in the woods, this bi-level spa at the Inn at Crestwood gives guests an unusual après-spa opportunity to commune with nature: deer, wild turkey, flying squirrels, even peregrine falcons all make their home there in the shadow of dramatic Grandfather Mountain. The spa specializes in skin therapy, massage therapy, and a range of beauty services, with gourmet dining on site. 3236 Shull's Mill Rd., Blowing Rock; 828-963-6646, crestwoodnc.com

Chetola Resort at Blowing Rock

The family-friendly recreational amenities at Chetola Resort emphasize an approach to fun and relaxation. In addition to swimming and fitness facilities, walking trails crisscross protected wilderness just beyond the gates, with skiing, whitewater rafting, and horseback riding nearby. A new spa opening in 2009 will feature offerings for kids and parents alike. North Main Street, Blowing Rock; 828-295-5500, chetola.com

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