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SUMMIT *life*

Soak in the off-season south of Denver

Road Trip: Colorado Springs spa-cation

By Kim Fuller
Special to the Daily

There's something in the water. From Alluvia Spa's built-in babbling decor at Cheyenne Mountain Resort, to the healing minerals of Manitou Springs and the rushing symphony of Seven Falls, the eastern helm of Pike's Peak is a piece of this state that's drenched in wellness.

From Summit County, the drive to Colorado Springs can be standard highway or scenic byway. If the weather and roads are clear, take the road less traveled — not I-70 through Denver, but CO-9 south and US-24 east — and you'll drive past the town of Manitou Springs before you hit Colorado Springs, sitting just over 6,000 feet above sea level. Call it the foothills, but the variable climate and scenic vistas tell you you're almost in the mountains.

A DAY-SPA TREAT

Stop off at Manitou for a day-spa treat. SunWater Spa opened in August, offering wellness and healing services through yoga and meditation, mineral water therapy and spa treatments.

Don Goede, managing co-partner of SunWater, said the focus of the facility is to promote healing and to honor the sacred place where indigenous health seekers have come for over 150 years. Before he and his team began the project, he said they performed ceremonies with the



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

Head out for an invigorating afternoon adventure at Seven Falls, recently renovated by its new owner — the world-famous luxury and hospitality king, The Broadmoor.

Lakota and Northern Utes and asked for permission to break ground.

Every aspect of the space is intentional, drawn from a vision that was derived by a trip to India, taken by him and Kate Tudor, SunWater managing co-partner. Modern bathroom fixtures, lockers, robes and slippers make the spa professional, but an authentic spirit shines

through.

Cedar tubs are filled with water from Seven Minute Springs, and, once heated, the baths smell of the rich wood. The waters are believed to be "health-giving," full of over a dozen natural minerals.

"It's just really rare to be able to get 100-percent mineral water," Goede said. "The water isn't heated through the ground, but we have solar

panels, so most of it is heated by Mother Nature — hence the name SunWater."

There's cold plunges, too, and indoor saline pools, filled with salt, to soak in. Stay for a dip, or sign up for one of the many spa treatments available on-site. Open-air massages, couples' treatments and Watsu — a rhythmic water massage — are on the menu, as well as a half-dozen facials.

The Garden of Eden is SunWater's signature facial. It's exfoliating and very moisturizing, layering vitamins, antioxidants and botanicals onto the skin. Men can try the Warrior facial, which uses a mask to calm irritation from shaving.

It's hard to leave SunWater, as it's easy to stay as long as the afternoon and evening light likes to linger on the outdoor tubs. On your way out of town toward Colorado Springs, stop at Adam's Mountain Cafe for nourishing comfort food. Try a house-made soup of the day or a Thai noodle salad, garnished with curried peanuts.

CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN RESORT

For an overnight room with a view, check-into Cheyenne

Mountain Resort. It's a dog-friendly lodging option, and the large property is made up of over 200 acres, complete with a large lake, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, several dining options, a golf course, tennis courts and a beautiful new spa.

The earthly paint tones, stone accents and tree trunk wall hangings are fitting decor for Alluvia Spa and Wellness Retreat, a semi-hidden destination near the resort's lake at the base of the Cheyenne Mountain.

The 5,000-square-foot spa shares a building with the fitness center, but take a left once you've entered, and you'll step into a peaceful reception area before being led into a sanctuary.

Ground down with a massage, like the Purify and Renew treatment with sea fennel, ginger root and eucalyptus oils used to re-mineralize the skin and increase immunity. A light body brush provides exfoliation to the skin, followed by an energetic whole-body massage, with special attention to the head, face, fingers and toes.

For more rigorous body work, go for the Deep Tissue Therapy. The therapist will

focus on specific tensions, using trigger point therapy and myofascial release techniques, paired with the healing and grounding scents of alpine arnica and sweet birch oils.

Spa manager, Katherine Bobbitt, said Alluvia is excited to coordinate with different departments of the resort.

"We want to pair a seasonal beverage from the juice bar or from up in our Elevations lounge," she said. "We'll have a package that comes with a gift card for a seasonal-beverage offering."

One of the spa's product lines, FarmHouse Fresh, will make it easy to coordinate treatments and amenities throughout the year.

"FarmHouse Fresh is really potent and wonderful," Bobbitt said. "But the products have no added fragrances or anything unnatural. They have just a great variety of combinations we can put together."

For fall, Bobbitt and her team are offering a caramel apple pear treatment, so just imagine what the holidays will hold.

SEVEN FALLS

After a relaxing time at



JASON VAN VLEET / SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

There's always time for one more spa treat, especially since there is another new gem in town. MX Spa in the Wyndham Grand Mining Exchange hotel in downtown Colorado Springs opened in July and is a unique combination of history and elegance.

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ROAD TRIP

From page 13

Alluvia, head out for an invigorating afternoon adventure at Seven Falls, recently renovated by its new owner — the world-famous luxury and hospitality king, The Broadmoor.

The natural attraction was flooded in 2013 (It was also wiped out previously in 1965), but Colorado philanthropist Philip Anschutz has put The Broadmoor estate to the good use by revitalizing the stunning area of natural wonders. It's a canyon filled with beautiful waterfalls; some can be accessed only by foot, but the central area has an optional shuttle service.

Check out the new restaurant, 1858 (named for the year the Colorado gold rush began), completed with the high-caliber of detail and class for which The Broadmoor is so well known.

The decor and service is comfortable and refined, offering a unique take on Colorado cuisine, so it's a great stop off for lunch or a special dinner occasion.

Seven Falls has a non-intrusive zip-line course installed as well, with another course of their Soaring Adventure still in production. The lines are very well hidden from hikers, with only the occasional fun screech of a rapid flyer passing through.

The canyon itself is peaceful, and it seems it will remain that way. The shuttle service keeps most cars out and the wildlife in.

"We're starting to see animals come back from construction," said Dan Sulewski, a naturalist for Greenbriar Outfitters.

He said a lot of people who have seen Seven Falls in the past think the transformation is "remarkable."

"It's the grandest mile in Colorado that you will ever see," he said, mimicking the attractions tagline. "It's absolutely stunning."

MX SPA

Back at Cheyenne Mountain Resort, dinner at Mountain View Restaurant wouldn't be complete without an after-dinner stop at their s'mores bar and a whiskey by the outdoor fire pit.

There's always time for one more spa treat, especially since there is another new gem in town. MX Spa in the Wyndham Grand Mining Exchange hotel in downtown Colorado Springs opened in July and is a unique combination of history and elegance.

Conierge Mark Rollert explained how, as they were converting the lower level into a fitness center and spa, they worked diligently with what was there. The hand-cut stonework inlaid into the walls was power-washed and sprayed with sealant. You can

still see some of the wood wedges that were originally jammed into the bricks for support.

The Mining Exchange was originally a gold-to-currency exchange during the gold rush, and all the safes are still there, including some down in the spa. The rich history of the spa space is subtly interwoven into what has become most elegant, with silk curtains and glistening chandeliers.

Start your treatment with a complimentary mimosa, glass of red or white wine or a soothing cup of coconut chocolate tea.

Weathered, aged or dry skin will be ready for a special occasion with the Pure Opulence Oxygen Facial. A rich serum is applied first, which is then permeated into every pore by an oxygen machine. It's the kind of facial that will leave your skin hydrating and glowing, not red and overly exposed.

Don't leave the property without stopping by Spring Orleans, the on-site restaurant for the Mining Exchange. It's New Orleans-inspired, with all the classic Cajun flavors. If you hit it on a Sunday, check out the brunch from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., with a carving station that begins at 11 a.m.

Just don't miss out on the beignets, covered with a layer of powdered sugar perfection.

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