

★ ON THE SCENE  
OUT+ABOUT

# UNPLUGGING IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES



LAKESIDE CABIN



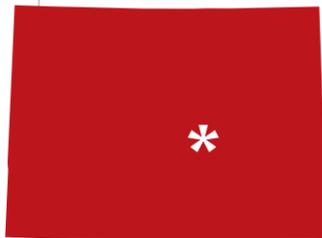
LODGE DINING ROOM



MARK SHAW-SMITH  
FLYFISHES FOR TROUT



EMERALD  
VALLEY CABIN



Colorado Springs, CO

*Taking a break from the digital world can be more difficult than we think, but a few days at a ‘wilderness retreat’ can be salve for the soul and a rediscovery of what’s really important.*

STORY: MARY ANN DESANTIS

This story originally was to be a recount of a luxurious few days at The Broadmoor Resort in Colorado Springs, but something more valuable happened in Colorado: I rediscovered how truly wondrous Mother Nature can be when you slow down and unplug for a few days.

My husband and I didn’t sacrifice luxury when we made the trek to the Ranch at Emerald Valley, one of The Broadmoor’s wilderness retreats on Cheyenne Mountain. And the climb wasn’t exactly roughing it—resort guests are shuttled in Cadillac Escalades to the lodge and cabins that are 8,200 feet above sea level. Both Emerald Valley Ranch and the Cloud Camp at the very top of the

mountain offer the same impeccable service that has distinguished the iconic Broadmoor for nearly 100 years.

The differences, however, are no televisions in the cabins and occasionally spotty Wi-Fi service. Even cell-phone calls are difficult to make. What guests do find right outside their doors are fishing ponds and streams, archery, horseback riding, canoes and kayaks, and hiking trails for all levels. And at night? The lodge is filled with board games and other guests who love to linger over dinner or sit by one of the roaring fireplaces or outdoor fire pits and talk. Yes, talk...without incessant text messaging.

“The Broadmoor found that many guests had a different picture of Colorado,” says



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Craig Hilton, manager of the Emerald Valley property. “They are often looking for authentic Colorado experiences, like trout fishing and horseback riding.”

The Broadmoor had the perfect place to add its “Wilderness Experience” packages, especially at Emerald Valley, which is surrounded by 100,000 acres of the Pike National Forest. Broadmoor founder Spencer Penrose had his original hunting cabin near today’s more modern Lakeside Cabin, one

of 13 secluded cabins featuring distinctive Rocky Mountain décor. Open since 2013, the ranch is an all-inclusive experience that includes chef-prepared gourmet breakfasts, lunches, and dinners in the grand lodge and an array of family-friendly activities.

While horseback riding and fly fishing are the most popular activities, we preferred to hike along the Emerald Valley trail on Cheyenne Mountain until a late spring snowstorm sent us scurrying back to our warm cabin, where we could relax by the fireplace. The next day, I found a less-rugged trail along a gurgling stream that flows from a pond where guests can fish for trout.

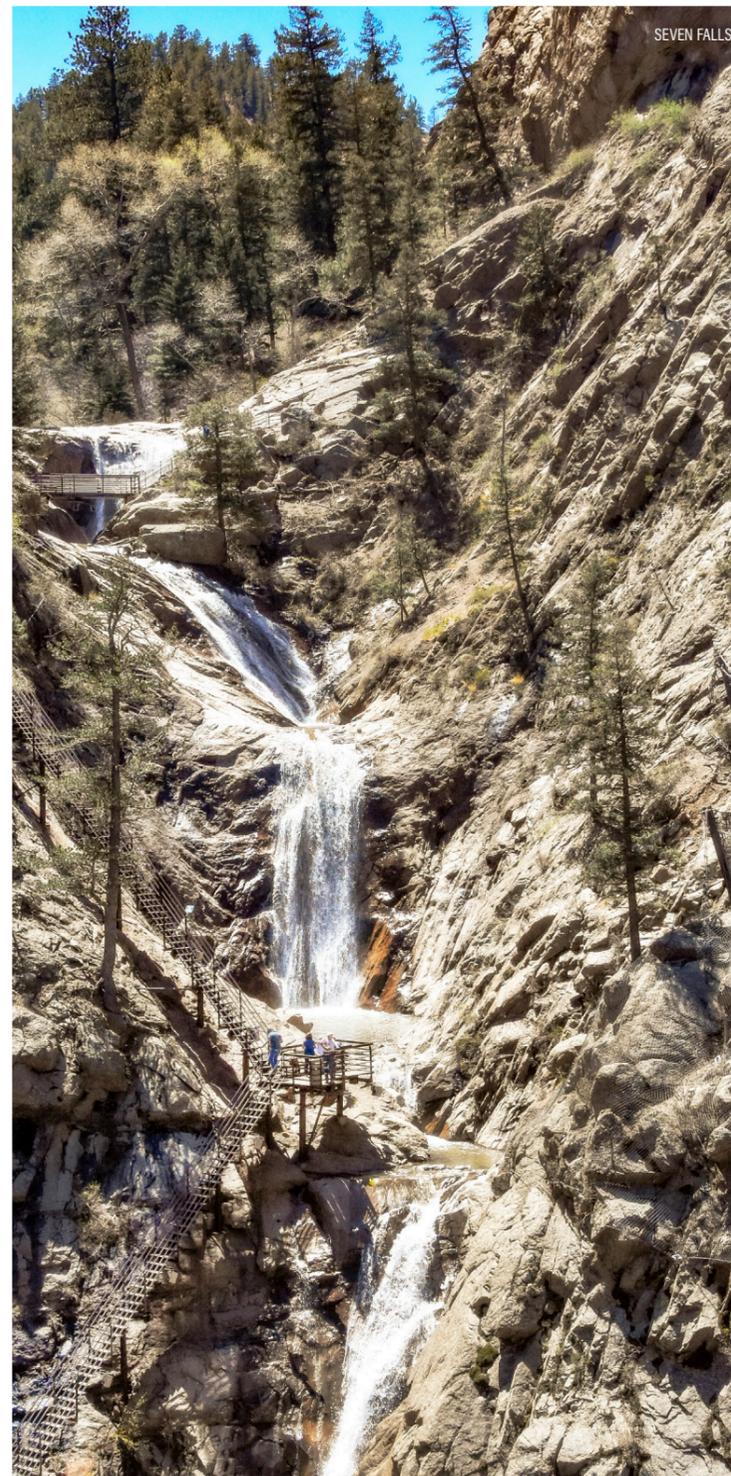
That’s where I spotted guest Mark Shaw-Smith from Oxford, England, casting his line like a pro. “I never fished much but after spending time at The Broadmoor’s Fly Fishing Camp, I love it.”

Mark and his wife, Roz, extended their conference-related trip at The Broadmoor to enjoy the wilderness activities at both the Fly Fishing Camp on the Tarryall River, 75 minutes west of the resort, and at Emerald Valley. While Mark perfected his trout fishing techniques, Roz spent mornings on horseback.

“This is a great place for family reunions because there is so much to do and we can customize the entire property for a family,” Craig adds. “We can arrange pony rides for kids or trail rides for the whole family.”

Last year, the ranch hosted a 103-year-old great-grandfather who was transported around the ADA-friendly property in a golf cart so he could watch his grandchildren and great-grandchildren fish and horseback ride.

“It’s just a wonderful place for families to reconnect,” Craig says.



Seven Falls, The Broadmoor and Dan Sulewski photos: Tony DeSantis



THE BROADMOOR

## BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN

Just as my husband and I were getting used to life without social media, it was time to head down the historic Old Stagecoach Road back to the luxurious Broadmoor. Who needs technology when the day includes a massage at the world-class Broadmoor Spa with its “relaxation” rooms and an exquisite wine dinner at Ristorante del Lago overlooking the resort’s centerpiece Cheyenne Lake.

The Broadmoor offers additional adventure activities near the property, including rides on the historic Pikes Peak Cog Railway, zip-lining over the South Cheyenne Canyon, and hiking along Seven Falls, the only waterfall in Colorado to be listed on *National Geographic*’s list of international waterfalls. Hiking up the 224 steps at Seven Falls seemed like a good idea at the time, but at the halfway marker we decided our middle-age legs weren’t up to the task. Seven Falls, however, was close enough to The Broadmoor to take a relatively flat trail back to the picturesque property with its manicured golf courses and lush landscaping.

The adventure to top all adventures, however, was spending my last morning with master falconer Dan Sulewski, who teaches the basics of the 4,000-year-old sport of falconry to Broadmoor guests. Only a few

hours before I arrived for my Falconry 101 class, a Sarasota couple participated in the second-level class and asked where they could continue learning this “sport of kings.” Unfortunately for Floridians, The Broadmoor is one of only three U.S. resorts where guests can interact with magnificent birds of prey, including hawks, falcons, and a 61-pound Eurasian eagle owl. A morning of falconry costs \$128, but it is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience for most people.

Founded by entrepreneur and philanthropist Spencer Penrose in 1918, The Broadmoor is on the cusp of its 100th anniversary. Its timeless grandeur and exquisite service were well known long before Twitter, Instagram, and the internet were even imaginable. And its reputation for excellence is well established, even when guests choose to unplug for a few days.



DAN SULEWSKI

### Trip Tip

Getting to The Broadmoor is easy now that Frontier Airlines flies directly from Orlando International Airport to Colorado Springs. In the fall, direct service will begin from Tampa International Airport and Fort Myers’ Southwest Florida International Airport to Colorado Springs. Flight time averages about four hours.



Mary Ann DeSantis  
Mary Ann DeSantis has written features for *Style* publications since 2006. She was recognized with first place Florida Press Club Excellence in Journalism Awards for Travel Writing in 2012 and 2016.

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—CRAIG HILTON