

UNIQUE LUXURY & BESPOKE EXPERIENCES OF TASTE, ELEGANCE & ADVENTURE

# CAVIAR AFFAIR

Holiday Travel Issue

THE BEST  
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**GLAMPING**  
IN MONTANA

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA

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Top: The breath-taking panoramic view from Paws Up; Above: The dining pavillion at Cliffside Camp in Summer; Right: A luxury tent at the Paws Up Pinnacle Camp.

CALL ME HIGH MAINTENANCE. OR CALL ME SAVVY. (OR BOTH!) I've never understood why one must sacrifice creature comforts to soak up unspoiled natural beauty.

That's why when I long to escape from it all – other than 5-diamond perks and pampering, that is! – I pause at [The Resort at Paws Up](#).

The 37,000-acre working cattle ranch in western Montana is the ultimate in refined relaxation.

Even city slickers can ride horses, try clay shooting, fly-fish for trout or hike among jaw-dropping scenery. You can go white-water rafting on the Blackfoot River, rappel down cliffs that made Lewis & Clark swoon or straddle a horse as part of dude ranch cattle drives.

And after you scamper you



PHOTOS: © PIETER DE LIAGRE BOHL

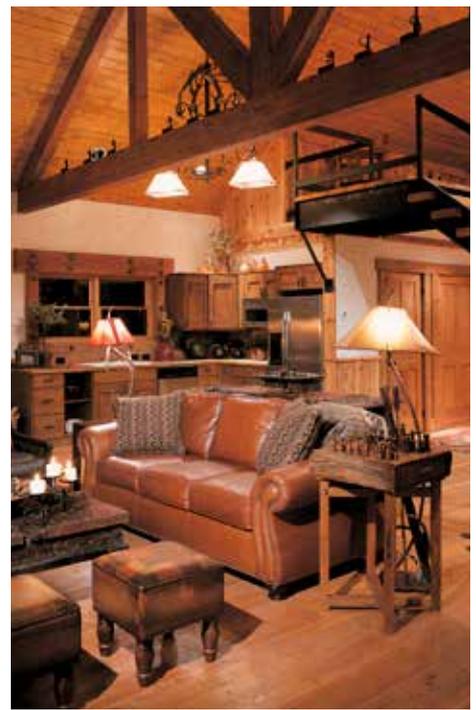
# Nature's Luxury Wonderland

**Resort at Paws Up in Montana: "beyond glamping" for the discerning jetset** by Polina Steier

can pamper – till the Black Angus cows come home. Paws Up takes the rustic roughing-it out of ranch resorts, providing luxurious spa treatments, heated bathroom floors, hot tubs, gourmet grub, devoted service and – we know. We had you at “luxurious spa.”

Actually, it's spectacular: a string of luxury tents beside a bubbling brook, with heated massage tables and a view of the meadows – but no cliched spa elevator music to soothe you. Instead, you'll hear birds chirp, the brook babble and the wind rustle the pines.

For digs, you can choose between nestling in



Top : The exterior view of the Big Timber Home with an interior view of the vaulted living room.  
 Below left: Snowmobiling is one of the many winter activities offered at Elk Creek..



a private home or in a luxury tent – that’s right, tent.

With two to four bedrooms accommodating four to eight guests, the sprawling homes are perf for family getaways or reunions, to which Paws Up caters. And the seclusion of the gated wilderness estates offers privacy even with their many-windowed views and exterior decks (complete with six-person hot tubs).

Beyond the fireplace and vaulted ceiling of the “great room” (aren’t they all?) lie a cook’s kitchen, a loft game room and master

suites, each with master bathrooms sporting a jetted spa tub, spa products, plush towels and a slate shower. (Other walls, floors and ceilings are largely wood.)

And don’t worry. You may be miles from nowhere, but you’ll have high-speed wireless Internet, 42-inch flat-screen TVs with satellite programming and surround-sound entertainment systems.

Also dotting the wilderness are Honeymoon Homes with champagne, a wagon ride to the restaurant and other amenities.

As for those tents, relax – they’re the ultimate glamping (luxury camping) and as secure as those used for big outdoor wedding receptions. River Camp tents even include a personal camping butler and housekeeping service, not to mention electricity, a bathroom, a bed and delish meals.

Once you’ve cocooned, you can rise and shine to roam among 100 miles of trails by horseback or by ATV, often amid cattle or elk that roam the property.

You’d have to stay weeks (darn!) to sample all the activities, from kayaking, paintball and mountain biking to swimming, boating, hiking and rappelling.

Rapt for rapids? They’re class I and II (easy-to-medium) on the Blackfoot River by raft or inflatable kayak, and class III-plus rapids (bumpy) for the Alberton Gorge all-

day whitewater adventure.

Or to tap your inner Hunger Games’ Katniss, try archery, taught from beginner to expert with an emphasis on hunting. You’ll quiver with excitement as you bend your bow toward 3D animal targets. No blood, no fowl.

Kids’ activities are all supervised and age-appropriate, from fishing, hiking, biking and horseback riding to wildlife appreciation, summer wilderness workshops and full- or half-day Kids Corps of Discovery getaways. Those day camps include visits to ghost towns and feeding of baby animals as well as lessons in gold mining, jewelry making, compass reading and animal tracking. Kids also can pretend to be princes and princesses on horse-drawn carriage rides.

After working up an appetite, head to the chuck wagon – that is, Paws Up’s two restaurants, whose rustic ranch cuisine melds fresh meats and produce from the area with sophisticated cooking. Try the Rocky Mountain trout sauteed with herbs – or opt for a barbecue with vintage Pinot Noirs.

With all this, satisfied you’ll be satiated? Well, don’t forget to pause to smell the pines at Paws Up. Chances are you’ve never seen such expansive natural beauty, which the resort bills as “The Last Best Place.” And it’s no exaggeration.

*Pawsup.com* ❖