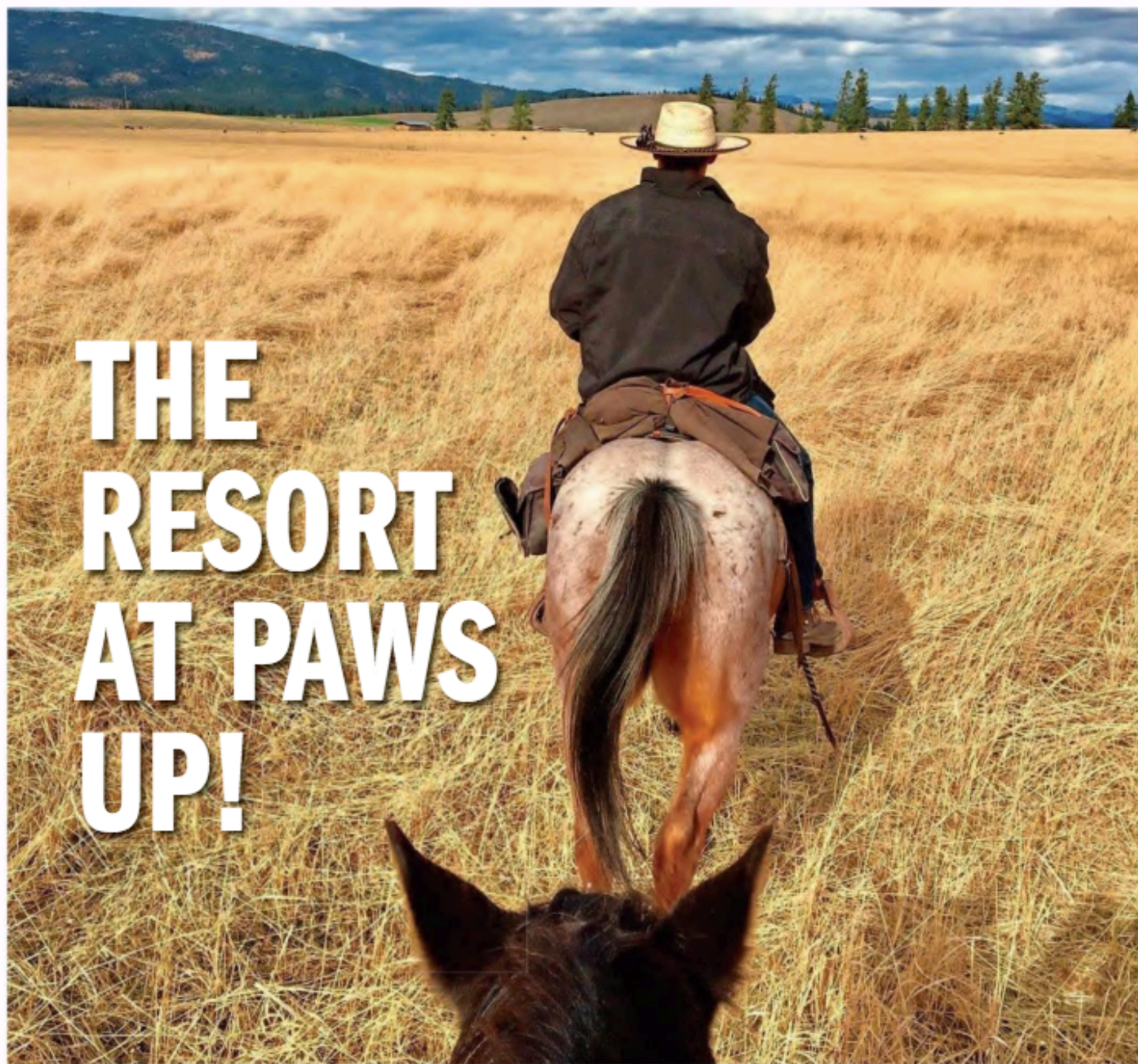


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DeltaStyle

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THE RESORT AT PAWS UP!

**Horseback rides, cattle drives,
and huckleberries make the
land where Lewis & Clark
explored, a unique retreat.**

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JENNIFER SCHMEER

"My favorite state has not yet been invented. It will be called Montana, and it will be perfect." Abraham Lincoln, 1864

Montana...

After a taste of ranch life in Texas, I was eager to explore more ranches in the United States. My daughter has found a new love for horses and reminds me of when I was younger with my paint participating in English riding jumping events.



The goal was to spend time horseback riding while being out in nature with no cell phones which brought us to Montana residing in the northwestern part of the United States in the Rocky Mountain region. The state's name is derived from the Spanish word meaning mountain with a nickname of "Big Sky Country."

They say Montana is untamed and scenic while holding interesting sites such as the Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park. This will be our first time to Montana and it will never be forgotten.

Montana took my breath away with its natural beauty and there I discovered The Resort at Paws Up!

Limousines Unlimited...

There is a straight flight from Shreveport, LA to Denver, CO and then you can pick up a flight to Missoula, MT for a total of just over three hours flying time. I decided to call Limousines Unlimited for the drive to Shreveport as I did not want to worry about directions or parking.

John, the driver will show up on time and dressed to the nines. You could easily call him "Dapper John." Limousines Unlimited has professional drivers who take such great care of you.

After quick introductions, John will gather our bags and place in the back after handing us refreshments. One could get very used to travelling this way. He will ask us if there is anywhere we would like to go prior to the airport in case we wanted to get a bite to eat or any last minute errands. You cannot beat that kind of service! Limousines Unlimited has been serving our community since 1993, and they are reliable and trust worthy.

We are eager to fly out, so we head straight to the airport while relaxing and enjoying the views.

Once we arrived, John promptly handed us our bags and told us to ride some horses for him, and we did just that!

Paws Up!

Paws Up is a luxury ranch consisting of 37,000 acres as an authentic working cattle ranch with a world-class spa in the middle of yellow, rolling meadows and a big sky. The best of so many worlds.

This is the land where Lewis & Clark explored and the resort pays homage by naming its luxurious accommodations after these expeditions.

There are five homes amongst tall timbers surrounded by mountains and rolling, yellow meadows, and you also can experience glamping with their luxury tents right beside Blackfoot River from late May through September. It is a playground for all ages amongst nature with no compromise.

We arrived in Missoula and there to greet us was Chandler, the Bellman standing over six-feet-tall. He helps us with our luggage, provides us with drinks and snacks while we loaded into the Paws Up vehicle.

Chandler is friendly and shares with us his family's background which consists of true heroes that dedicate their lives to Federal and Local law enforcements. Chandler is planning in following in his dad's and brother's footsteps and has been attending the local university studying Criminology.

While we drive through the woods this dark night, Chandler shares bear stories and all of the other different animals that call this resort home. Excitement pumps through our veins!

Wilderness Estate...

We pull up to a beautiful home with a 1700 square-foot front and back porch and you know the views are going to be off the chart once the sun rises. Chandler tells me that we are staying in the estate with one of the best panoramic views, and I can confirm he spoke the truth.

He brings our suitcases upstairs and starts a fire and gets the six-person hot tub

outside going just for me! I feel at home while admiring the features of this home and absorbing all of the interior designs with sharp colors and fabrics that say touch me.

The owners are a husband and wife team named, Dave and Nadine Lipson with Mrs. Lipson receiving credit for the interior designs for each home on the ranch and she has skills. Mad skills!

The Estate holds vaulted ceilings, three separate master suites, jetted tubs and showers in each suite, a Great room with a fireplace, a loft game room, high-speed wireless, surround sound entertainment systems with 42 inch flat screens in almost every room. Also, a full size washer and dryer to help with the clothes while on the holiday.

Bangladesh Project...

After a soak in the outdoor hot tub, we dive into the gourmet sandwiches, chips & salsa, and the meat & cheese platters waiting for us after our day of travel in our kitchen. In the refrigerator, my teenager will find it fully stocked with grape, orange, cherry, cola and water drinks.

I notice on the counter two very cool reusable market bags filled with yoga mats, books on yoga and smoothies and all kinds of fun treats, containers; all as welcome gift bags for both of us. These hand-made market bags are a product of the partnerships the resort and Saidpur Enterprises created and sell as part of the Bangladesh Project. By purchasing these 100% fiber reusable bags, you become part of this effort which creates an international market for these bags while providing fair wage jobs for Bangladesh woman and a portion of sales goes to social and educational projects for the community of Saidpur. Most recently they purchased school supplies for over 400 local children and working to build a sewing academy. The goal is to create life changing opportunities in the community of Saidpur



and is a great idea for the rest of the world.

Our stay coincided with a special event the resort was hosting called, AdrenZen that focused on yoga, spa treatments, organic meals & smoothies as well as the other activities the resort offers from fly fishing, ATV riding and zip lining adventures. I wish I could say we participated in the yoga sessions, but instead you could find us horseback riding under the big sky.

We slept like babies in our beds, and I took the perfect bubble bath once the sun rose. And the views from the front porch were magnificent. Outside chipmunks scurry and eagles fly above, we find our very own car, a KIA waiting for us to help us explore the ranch.

My daughter will be my driver while on the ranch, and this is the perfect setting to practice those teenage driving skills. I cannot even describe the excitement as she drove us to the Trough restaurant for breakfast through the Angus cattle that had made their way onto the road. I filmed while she drove with the rolling, yellow meadows as the backdrop.

Fresh air, no traffic and wide open spaces are all makings for a great way to start the day.

We arrive at the Trough restaurant that serves breakfast and lunch daily with organic ingredients from local farms. The morning will hold fresh omelets made to order, homemade pastries and fresh juices.

And I noticed the country design that transports you to a simpler time. Cowgirl hats off to the interior designer, Mrs. Lipson!

After breakfast, Julie will take us on a tour of the ranch and of Blackfoot River, the star from the novel and movie, River runs through it.

Julie knows her stuff! She has a passion for Montana and shares information on the trees and wildlife which was a perfect way for us to become familiar with the land. Julie is a sweetheart who is there to help guests in any way possible. She points to an eagle perched on a tree limb straight ahead, and we view other homes on the ranch that sit directly on Blackfoot River that is a fly fisherman's dream come true.

She will also show us the resort's indoor equestrian center which happens to be the largest in Montana. It is beautiful with over 56 stalls for the horses! We find the location where most of the horses are residing and my daughter falls in love. The horses are majestic with their winter coats and the clear, crisp sky is the perfect background. One horse out of the herd comes over just for some love and scratches. We submit.

The tour could have ended here and we would have been delighted, but we pressed forward and ended up beside the Blackfoot River with its beauty filled with flowing, rushing water with its soothing sound and mountains just behind. What a glorious view.

My daughter sat along the banks and it is one of the most beautiful, natural spots. No cell phones needed at this location and there is just something about a rushing river. Fly fisherman's dream.

Live Cattle Drive...

Just the thought of it was thrilling – a live cattle drive with full participation. I discovered we have a talent for herding, but I am getting ahead of myself. Chris, a cute, true cowboy and Natasha with flowing red hair are our wranglers who will take us across the Montana landscape directing herd of Angus cattle and it was the best activity we

have ever participated in at a resort, but this does not feel like a resort! Every western that I had seen on television flashes in my mind while riding across the ranch on horses. We are feeling like cowgirls.

The sun breaks through the clouds and lit the rolling hills golden and the cattle were untamed with us behind the reigns. After guiding the cattle back and across the ranch, we end with the experience to pick one cow out of the herd in order to isolate him or her from the herd. A challenge.

My daughter goes first and immediately zooms in on a young cow pushing the cow out of the herd and blocking her from the rest. Chris, who is handsome and rugged in a good way, calls her "the cow whisper." We were all proud of her results!

The big sky seems low and stretches from one edge to the other. My daughter looks at me as we are riding back side by side towards the gate and says, "Now this is the kinda trips I like! If you can plan more like these, I am down!" Teenage stamp of approval! What more could you want? The trip is already a success and it is just the first day!

Spa Town...

Our cattle drive experience will last a lifetime and now we are able to drive right over to this two-story house in between some rolling hills on the ranch for spa treatments. What a wonderful way to wrap up the day after horseback riding.

Some clouds roll in and the temperature drops with some winds reaching across the mountains as we step into Spa Town, a full-service, world-class spa offering facial and body treatments for all ages. As we enter into the warm space of Spa Town, the staff quickly brings warm tea for us and gathers

our riding jackets.

After scrubs are selected, we will be guided upstairs into our private, individual spa suites for treatments. The warm table was waiting with the windows opened, so I could hear the winds blowing around the leaves. Sixty-minute Swedish massage for me and a 60-minute treatment of Chi Balancer Reflexology for my teenager.

There is something about getting a massage with the windows open for that second floor view of rolling hills that remind me of yellow from Van Gogh's paintings, and the only sound is of leaves being blown with force with a slight whistle.

Pompl

For dinner, my daughter will drive us on the curvy road to our dinner reservations at Pompl driving by the outside obstacle course and racecar track.

The views are amazing and my daughter compares it to Jurassic Park as we drive past the bison, Angus cows and elk. Dreamy!

Dinner will take place at Pompl by a roaring fire that lights up the room. Alice is our waitress and she is adorable and tells me that my southern accent reminds her of her theatre days in Texas during school.

Alice will present to my daughter the Root Vegetable Soup with beet, fennel, ginger, cabbage, turmeric crème fraiche, sprouted fenugreek and dill. I decided on starting with Seared Diver Scallops with heirloom squash puree, cured tomato relish and 30-year-old balsamic.

For our main course, we will savor the Dry Aged Bison Ribeye with Yukon smashed potatoes, asparagus, sundried tomato compound butter. A true masterpiece! Mouthwatering!

We end the evening with the Huckleberry Pecan Tartlet with salted caramel sauce and crème fraiche ice cream. The dinner was amazing and the ambiance was ranch cool with a warm fire energizing the room.

The drive back to our Wilderness Estate will bring us to deer showing up alongside the road looking up to see the bright headlights. We stop to admire. You can only see the mountain outlines in the dark skies. As we continue, we will see more deer as they cross the road right in front of us as we stop to admire and take in this beautiful, natural moment.

This will be great driving practice for a teenager and a highlight for me being able to share how to stop for wilderness; for the untamed.

Heading back to our Estate with the gorgeous views, this has been one of the best days and the best bubble baths are to follow. It will be easy to close our eyes under the Montana skies for a great nights rest.

Horses and the majestic Blackfoot River...

Julie picks us up after a wonderful breakfast delivering us to another part of



Dry Aged Bison Ribeye with Yukon smashed potatoes, asparagus, sundried tomato compound butter at Pompl

Holiday Travel Tips

The Resort at Paws Up!: Pawsup.com; 877-588-7151

Limousines Unlimited:
limousinesunlimitedwm.com; 318-322-5466

the ranch with mountains and the sounds of the Blackfoot River can be heard just off in the near distance.

Jackie, the Equestrian Manager, greets us dressed in chaps, hair braids (one on each side of her face), and a cowgirl hat with a badge of honor just below her left eye that holds blackness from a horse breaking incident. She looks like she just walked off the set of a Hollywood western movie, and we are impressed!

Horses will be matched with riders and our guide, Kelly will take the lead guiding us across the Montana open landscape into the woods along the Blackfoot River. Kelly is a world traveler pursuing her desire to become an attorney while raising a son.

Kelly will take us through the woods while the sounds of the river soothes our souls. We will ride upon a herd of deer making their way through the trees. Galloping by boulders with light rain just light enough to make you feel like a cowgirl withstanding the elements. Kelly provided my daughter with hand heating pads to keep us warm during the ride, so we had a few perks besides nature at its finest!

Three hours of riding along the Blackfoot River listening to the rushing water; I have fallen in love with Montana, and Kelly was a great tour guide. It was exciting being on a ride looking out for bears and mountain lions! It was thrilling!

After our horseback adventure, we enjoy some time at our Wilderness Estate with a

crackling fire and Kobe hamburgers and fries delivered to our table by room service.

Later, I will enjoy another bubble bath while the towels heat up on the rack.

Pompl

My teenager will drive us across the ranch for dinner again at Pompl this beautiful evening. The fire is going strong and the atmosphere is relaxing. The night will begin with Tuna Tataki with avocado puree, sweet soy, pickled carrot and blue willow farms micro arugula. Our taste buds are alive!

The main course for the evening will bring us the Braised Montana Raised Leg of Lamb consisting of garam masala, coconut milk, cashews, Italian plum chutney sultana rice with golden raisins.

For our closer of the evening, we will sample the Honey-Thyme Mousse with orange and almond semolina shortbread, Concord grape gastrique, and candied lemon peel. Another wonderful evening at Pompl!

The next morning, we will leave and our driver, John from Paws Up will pick us up in time with breakfast in insulated, reusable boxes; perfect for traveling, and he made sure to bring hand warmers for my daughter for her early morning flight which I thought was so thoughtful of the staff. It was Kelly's suggestion that they provide a couple warmers for our early morning flight.

John provided great service while sharing the efforts of his son, who has dedicated his life to wilderness and park preserving efforts. The staff has great stories to share!

Paws Up takes you back to another time filled with nature and wildlife as the focus. Fresh air, stimulating natural beauty; the perfect place for a family holiday! We will never forget our cattle drive, the people that make this ranch so special and the natural wonders!

Landing back in Shreveport, it was nice to see a friendly face, Nelda from Limousines Unlimited who is there to greet us and assist with our luggage that has differently gotten heavier than when we left. Grateful to have made it back home safe and appreciative of the assistance!

Nelda is looking sharp in her suit with a pink, silk tie ready to lend a helping hand. She made sure to stock the limousine with water and fresh ice for our tired traveled bodies.

We are tired, so it is nice to stretch out in the back of the limousine while Nelda takes care of navigating our way back home through traffic.

During the ride home, my daughter will need to get a bite to eat, so Nelda finds us a restaurant for a quick refill of nourishment. Nelda made it easier for us returning home after a long weekend working on the ranch in Montana!

Montana holds a special place in our hearts and Paws Up made it all possible! It is better than Jurassic Park and the people, the views and the experiences that reside in Montana are dreams come true!