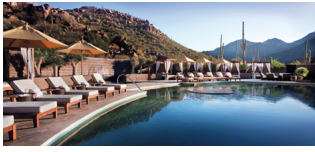


Written by Written by Melissa Larsen
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Tried and true. Test out these AFM-approved hot spots.



If you're in search of a close-to-home-but-not-too-close summer escape, visit...

The Ritz-Carlton Spa, Dove Mountain

It's nice to treat yourself to a day of decadence. And that is exactly what **The Ritz-Carlton Spa, Dove Mountain** offers to its guests. After an easy hour-and-a-half drive, I reached The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain in Marana, ready to be pampered at the resort's on-property spa. After a quick tour of the space, I was whisked away for the Hohokam Indigo Herbal Poultice massage. The unique 80-minute treatment combines warm steamed herbal poultice with Royal Thai and traditional massage techniques. The treatment is designed to channel the healing power of indigo used traditionally by shamans, and it left me 100 percent relaxed, stretched and ready to head to the spa's saltwater Serenity Pool.

Even all the poolside lounging in the world can't cure hunger, so my staycation was capped off with dinner at CORE Kitchen & Wine Bar where smoked chocolate s'mores is a stellar way to end the evening. www.ritzcarlton.com.



If you're seeking a one-of-a-kind sensory experience, try out the...

Passion Project

Whatever your pleasure, Fairmont Scottsdale Princess has developed a new **Passion Project** for you to experience it to the fullest. While Passion Projects spotlight everything from gardens to yoga, my love is food so it was off to the property's La Hacienda and Bourbon Steak restaurants for tequila and steak tastings, respectively.

At Demystifying Tequila, I was treated to tastes paired alongside La Hacienda's divine Modern Mexican fare. (While sipping, Fairmont's resident tequila expert was available to share her knowledge of the spirit.)

After a short walk across the resort, I then enjoyed the Snake River Farms American Kobe Beef Tasting at Bourbon Steak. I indulged in a trio of melt-in-your-mouth American Wagyu beef, each sided with a delectable veggie. Not only did I leave with a happy belly, but the Passion Projects awakened me to how incredible even the most misunderstood (tequila) or commonplace (steak) foods can truly be.

www.scottsdaleprincess.com.