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Feeling Isolated In The Pandemic? Canyon Ranch May Be The Answer

Judy Koutsky | September 16, 2020

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The Covid pandemic has been tough on everyone's emotional and psychological wellbeing. Many people are feeling isolated and are struggling with feelings of being overwhelmed or depressed. Enter [Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort](#). Located in the Berkshires, the property focuses on a person's mind, body and spirit.

The resort welcomes a large number of solo travelers and for many people, especially those living alone in Manhattan and other urban areas, the simple act of being able to connect with others has huge health benefits.

On a recent trip, I met two women who live alone in Manhattan and booked the Canyon Ranch trip to be around other people (in a safe, socially distant way), while still making time to care for themselves. They quickly made friends with other travelers and commented that the companionship alone was well worth the visit. Both were staying for more than seven days and felt like Canyon Ranch was a safe and welcoming environment during a time of such uncertainty and vulnerability. While these women went to Canyon Ranch looking for companionship, I went looking for solitude.

BULLFROG + BAUM

As a mom to two high-energy boys, it's never quiet at my house. Add to that remote learning and schedules that went out the window due to Covid, and I felt frazzled and disjointed. A two-night stay at Canyon Ranch felt like a week-long vacation. I made a concerted effort to eat my meals alone, even when others asked to join me (in my real life, I am surrounded by noise, in my Canyon Ranch life, I wanted to enjoy the solitude). I didn't bring a book or check my phone (phones and electronics are strongly frowned upon in public areas), but instead ate my meals mindfully—taking in the amazing views of the Berkshires, listening to the birds, and tasting my food. For a crazed mom, this felt like heaven.

But as a social person, I didn't want to be alone all the time. So I joined group hikes, shared a canoe with a lovely person who also had kids my age (we bonded instantly), and I joined an early morning meditation group. But I balanced that out with quiet solo walks, reading on the Adirondack chairs scattered throughout the property, and enjoyed a 100-minute massage (I know, bliss).

I met several women just like me—working women with husbands and kids that they had left behind in order to reconnect with themselves and find their inner balance. One woman told me she has been going to Canyon Ranch for one week a year, for the past 15 years. I completely understood. Vacations are a great way to spend time with the family and create memories, but a trip to Canyon Ranch is a gift, a retreat, people, often women, give themselves (while a good percentage of guests are women, men also frequent the property).

What makes Canyon Ranch so special is the diverse, yet inclusive, programming. If you're into hiking, but not sure if you can keep up, no worries. The hikes are broken down into levels of difficulty. So the hard-core hikers can join together first thing in the morning and enjoy steep inclines, while those looking for an easier hike can join with like-minded people in the afternoon for a walk around the woods. An older woman I met loved outdoor activities, but she didn't want to feel pressured to go at someone else's pace, so she booked private hikes and kayak trips.

For me, any kind of active adventure is calling my name: canoeing, hiking, kayaking, SUP. For others, it may be the lectures, the various spa treatments, or yoga and meditation that is the draw.

"We have always been known as a safe, relaxing environment for our guests," says managing director Mindi Morin. Many even think of us as a 'home away from home,' in particular our solo travelers. There's the opportunity to do what you want during the day and come together, or not, for meals and other activities if you are so inclined. Most of all, solo women travelers see reflected in their experience here the sense of caring and lack of judgment that is at the core of what Canyon Ranch is."

Planning a trip



Activities range from scaling a climbing wall, to biking and archery. CANYON RANCH

Canyon Ranch recently created Pathway programs, curated experiences aimed at presenting a unique physical, mental, and spiritual challenge to address what people are going through given this unique Covid environment. These 3-, 5-, and 7-night packages are a good value and ideal for new travelers as well as returning guests with a focused intent. These packages include five, eight, or 10 curated services and activities. “Many people are emerging from the time of quarantine with a genuine sense of wanting to work on themselves, to find renewed sense of purpose and physical wellbeing,” says Morin. “We see that as a true focus of the solo traveler in particular, and in addition to the Pathways programs that were created during the Covid period, we are gearing up for the holidays.” Morin says she sees many solo travelers during the holiday season. “We offer programming during the Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Year time frame that is always very well received, as people end their year with new resolutions,” says Morin.

Why Canyon Ranch?

BULLFROG + BAUM



The resort focuses on mind, body and spirit. CANYON RANCH

[Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort](#) is the quintessential choose-your-own-adventure destination. The intimate property—there are 126 guest rooms—has plenty to offer. If you're into the outdoors, this is your place. It has an extensive outdoor sports program that features hiking, biking (they have more than 40 bikes, including hybrid, mountain, and road bikes) tennis, canoeing, kayaking, archery, SUP, Shinrin Yoku, Tai Chi, a climbing wall, and a high ropes course. It also offers hikes off property to some of the Berkshires' most scenic spots. There are also trails on the 120-acre property.

The Spa

What makes Canyon Ranch different from other resorts is that it has a great spa, but the property offers so much more than that. The combination of spa and health and healing is really unique. Says Morin, “One can see a doctor, a healing-energy therapist, go rowing on a lake, meditate, and have an amazing facial all in one day.” The spa services are created and curated specifically for Canyon Ranch, and the brands it partners with are aligned with the Canyon Ranch mission. Favorite treatments include: Kypris Signature Facial and the Chakra Balancing Treatment.

The property is really a true wellness destination, and the spa is just a part of that journey.