

Ozark Sanctuary

A mountain-inspired haven nestled in the highland forests near the Missouri-Arkansas border.



Cedar Creek Spa at Big Cedar Lodge

LOCATION

Ridgedale, Missouri

OWNER

Bass Pro Shops' Big Cedar Lodge

OPENED

November 2014

THE SPACE

18,000 square feet, including: 11 treatment rooms, each with its own fireplace; men's/women's saunas, Jacuzzis and steam rooms; open-air showers; indoor grotto pool; ice room; full service salon; and a private group suite

STAFF

20 massage therapists, 10 estheticians, 3 managers and 4 front desk attendants

WEBSITE

bigcedar.com/spa



THE DISTINCTION

A stunning, candle-lit grotto pool area, an Aspen-lined entryway and stone-laden accent walls are Cedar Creek Spa's unique physical standouts. "Everything we do is inspired by the beauty, nature and rustic elegance of the Ozark Mountains," says spa manager Barb Reffitt. But equally important are the veteran therapists. "We have excellent, caring and well-trained staff," Reffitt reports, "many of whom have worked here for more than a decade, when the spa was merely two quaint cottages."

CAPTURING CLIENTELE

Because the spa is a part of Big Cedar Lodge, the majority of its clientele comprises overnight guests, but more and more locals have been making their way there. "We've seen steady growth among local and regional guests as they learn about us. The secret is out!" laughs Reffitt. The spa frequently hosts journalists who cover their experiences; this, in conjunction with the Lodge's overall advertising campaigns, have been successful marketing avenues. Reffitt emphasizes, however, that the best referrals tend to be verbal. "Word of mouth is a powerful thing!" she says. "Our guests are often so wowed by their experiences that they'll send their friends and family to us as well."

MANAGEMENT M.O.

"I have an open door, hands-on policy," explains Reffitt. "I'm always involved in our daily operations and I do any and all jobs." And her employment strategy? Hire those with a passion for spa and the spa world. In other words, her employees must live and breathe spa—"This is one big, happy family!" she says.

IN-DEMAND SERVICE

There's no question as to why the Ozarks Rain Treatment (50 min./\$140) is a noteworthy menu offering—clients get to experience a battery-operated hydraulic table, complete with eight adjustable shower jet heads. "While we wash off the body scrub, we use a waving motion with the water to simulate the gentle ebb and flow of nearby Table Rock Lake," Reffitt details. After the guest's skin has been slathered in cedar-infused body butter, they're wrapped in a warm robe and guided to a chaise longue at the grotto pool to relax.

THE GOODS

Management worked with ReadyCare Industries to develop a signature scent for their locker room and shower amenities—a blend of green tea and lemongrass, which Reffitt describes as "fresh, light and citrusy." In treatment rooms, the spa's staff has opted for BodyBliss private label scrubs and body butters, along with Éminence and Dr. Lili Fan as its backbar brands. 🌿

