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May/June 2004

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NEW *faces*



CAROLE JACOBS

Now residing in the Golden Trout Wilderness in California's Southern Sierra, Carole Jacobs knows adventure and world travel. *travelgirl's* newest Editor, handling Fitness, Carole comes fit with experience. As an editor with *SHAPE* magazine for 18 years, and the founder of its adventure travel section in 1992, Carole has hiked many mountains and investigated countless destinations. As a longtime member of several distinguished organizations, including the Society of American Travel Writers and the American Society of Journalists and Authors, as well as the author of several books on travel and women's health, Carole has penned stories on everything from the stress of urban sport to walking around the L'Arc de Triomphe. In "6 Fresh Air Escapes" on page 32, she shares some ideas for de-stressing and finding fitness in the great outdoors. She is currently working on *The Boomer Babe's Bible*, to be published in 2005. Carole has been published in more than 100 national and regional publications. We welcome her to the *travelgirl* team!



6 fresh air fitness escapes

Come spring and a woman's mind turns to thoughts of bathing suits, bikini waxes and avoiding full-length mirrors. If months of inactivity and overeating have left you wondering how you ever got a leg (much less two) into last year's shorts, it may be time for a fitness vacation.

Forget about boot camps where they chain you to a treadmill or stairclimb you comatose. Spring is busting out all over—so why not do likewise? Imagine hiking through alpine meadows, horseback riding to looking-glass lakes or cycling past vineyards, then unwinding with rejuvenating spa treatments that soothe stress and shoo away those pesky crow's feet. From California to Pennsylvania, these six spring fitness escapes will tone your booty and send those excess pounds packin', all while exposing you to lots of fresh air, butterflies and spring blooms.

BY CAROLE JACOBS

1 Cal-a-Vie Health Resort, Vista, California

Perfect for: *travelgirls* who need some serious intervention and hand-holding before braving the beach.

Okay, forget about hiding under a muumuu. What you really need is Cal-a-Vie. With a 4-to-1 staff to guest ratio and only 24 guests at a time, this Mediterranean-style resort delivers the sort of personalized service you'd never get at those mega-spas, along with an ultra-scenic setting that makes you feel like you're vacationing in Provence (rather than going on a weight-loss vacation). Terraced into the flowered hillsides are 24 designer cottages furnished with everything a *travelgirl* needs to feel pampered: French antiques, fine linens, fresh flowers, plus shuttered windows that overlook mounds of bougainvillea and let in the fragrance of sweetheart roses, jasmine, lavender



and citrus blossoms. The resort also has a lovely outdoor pool, manicured gardens, a tile-roofed cluster housing the fitness center and spa—and a Romanesque bathhouse with muted-colored stones, hand-painted tiles, soft lighting and

antique furniture. After you arrive, the friendly staff assesses your state of fitness and designs a customized exercise and nutrition program aimed at reining in your bottom line (or wherever your bulges happen to be), combining the latest exercise moves with calorie-controlled gourmet spa cuisine that's so beautiful you don't know whether to frame it or eat it. (The spa chef does all the counting for you and shares his recipes so you can create his edible artistry at home.)

Although Cal-a-Vie offers one of the more highly-structured fitness vacations in spadom, (each day begins with a sunrise hike, followed by breakfast on the verandah and your customized fitness program) this is hardly a boot camp. You can forget about sneaking out to a local convenience store to grab a bag of Doritos. Face it, you're outnumbered. That said, the resort ensures you have plenty of downtime to stop and smell the roses (lavender, etc.), play tennis on the flower-

ringed courts, golf on their private 18-hole course, take a meditative stroll around the beautiful rock-lined labyrinth or drop by the spa or bathhouse for some serious pampering or a soak in steamy wonders. After lobsterizing yourself in the Jacuzzi or letting the Vichy shower pound away soreness, you can retire on a cushy daybed in the sunlit lounge, gaze at the skylight in the wood-beamed vaulted ceiling, and count your losses. In pounds, that is. For more information and reservations, call (866) 772-4283 or visit www.cal-a-vie.com.



2 Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa, Sonoma, California

Perfect for: *travelgirls* who want to combine a calorie-blasting vacation with days of wine and roses. (This resort is a romantic place to bring your significant other.)

This eucalyptus-shaded resort in California's wine country boasts something few American spa

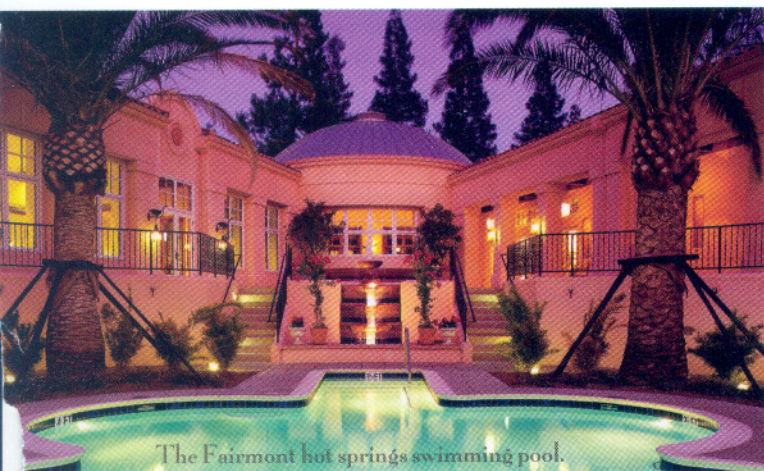
resorts can: its own hot springs. The bubbling—and, some say, curative

mineral waters are piped from under the hotel into two new swimming pools and Jacuzzis and show up in two ultra-popular treatments: The Rejuvenator and the Revitalizer, designed to render you relaxed or raring to go. We suggest the latter if you're heading for the fitness club, where you'll find rows of gleaming, state-of-the-art exercise machines—from ellipticals to stair-climbers. Or sign up for yoga, tai chi, body sculpting, aqua classes, mindfulness meditation, Pilates or a private session with a personal trainer for tips on ways to zap stubborn pounds. Then head outdoors to explore Sonoma's small-town charm by foot, bicycle, mountain bike, horse or by riding the romantic wine train—ideal for those of

Healthy
cuisine
at the
Fairmont.



you who plan to do a lot of wine tasting. (The hotel concierge can book rentals and tours for you.) From the spa, it's an easy walk to historic Sonoma Plaza, where pedestrian paths lined with stately oaks wind past restaurants and boutiques, or get your pulse racing on Sonoma Overlook Trail, a hilly two-miler that loops through wildflower meadows ringed with oaks. From the spa, back roads spoke out in all directions for scenic spins past vineyards in full blossom and wineries housed in centuries-old stone mansions or Spanish haciendas. Want a romantic adventure that will get your heart racing? Imagine quietly soaring above a patchwork quilt of fields, farms



The Fairmont hot springs swimming pool.

and vineyards, an expanse of sun-drenched Pacific winking in the distance. The only element missing in this dreamy scenario is the pesky sound of an engine. That's because in this setting there isn't one. Flying in an FAA-certified glider at Vintage Aircraft is not only safe, but the best and most thrilling way to see the wine country. After a mother craft tows you and your pilot anywhere from 3,000 to 5,280 feet, you're set free to spiral to the ground as gracefully as a California condor. Once you're back on terra firma you'll have no trouble appreciating the earthly pleasures of your suite's marble fireplace, bathroom with whirlpool

tub and private courtyard with a meandering path and stone fountain. Take your partner by the hand, pick a spot and pop a cork. It's good for your heart (and soul). For more information and reservations, call (866) 540-4499 or visit www.fairmont.com.

Green Valley Spa, St. George, Utah

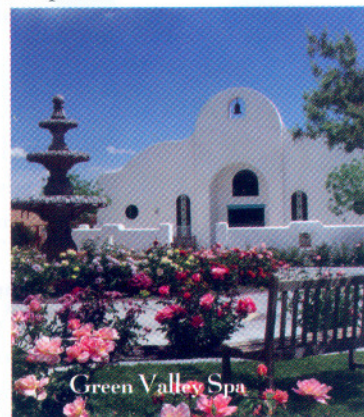
Perfect for: *travelgirls* who prefer to drop pounds in the great outdoors. This resort is also an easy place to make new fitness buddies.

Overlooking miles of desert solitaire backed by red rock canyons and pine-clad peaks,

this palm-fringed fitness oasis offers three floors of ultra-scenic, fast-paced, fat-blasting

adventures, plus a gigantic 25,000-square-foot fitness facility and spa with all the latest and greatest equipment and classes. Your only problem at Green Valley will be deciding what to do first. Chew over your options in the sun-drenched dining room, where Southwestern-style gourmet spa cuisine is served family-style. For a scenic workout that will leave you gasping (in more ways than one), take a guided power hike or mountain bike ride in Snow Canyon, where waterfalls slide down pink cliffs and petroglyphs dance on canyon walls. (Scores of guided tours are offered on three different levels.) Or sign up for multi-day hikes in nearby Zion National Park. Trails zigzag to red rock cliffs, past weeping walls, through narrow archways and up to peaks so craggy you'll be clinging for dear life to those embedded ladders the National Park is kind enough to supply.

Back at the spa, learn the ropes at the resort's 35-foot-high "beginner" rock climbing cliff. After scanning for foot and handholds, you'll head straight up. En route to the top you'll pass wildflowers peeking from every nook and cranny, and tiny lizards scurrying across the rock face. At the summit, drink in the view of rosy canyons tumbling from sage-scrubbed peaks. After this beginner's wall, your instructor will promote you to more challenging climbs in Canyon Rock Climbing Park, a natural amphitheater marked with hundreds of challenging routes.



Green Valley Spa

You can wash off the dust in a jewel-toned bath peppered with crushed pearls and mineral salts. Afterwards, lace up your trail shoes for a twilight stroll with the spa's shaman. Or retire to the sun-deck of your casita and watch the sun surrender to a canopy of stars. **For more information and reservations, call (800) 237-1068 or visit www.greenvalleyspa.com.**

4 Triple Creek Ranch, Darby, Montana

Perfect for: *travelgirls* who want a wilderness experience that combines the rugged and the Ritz.

Most dude ranches are more Guns n' Roses than Gucci—rustic homes-on-the-range where the beds are covered with scratchy wool blankets, the pillows are flatter than hotcakes and the activity and meal schedules promote a herd mentality. At the crack of dawn the breakfast bell clangs to “come ‘n git it” while those “adventurous” trail rides they promised you turn out to be nose-to-tail affairs.

Triple Creek Ranch, a Relais & Chateaux property tucked away in *A River Runs Through It* country of southwestern Montana, is a horse of a different color. This gorgeous log-cabin wilderness resort is the perfect place for sophisticated *travelgirls* who want to ride the high country by day and sip fine wines by night. Celebs like Richard Gere and Fran Drescher check into the ranch for days, sometimes weeks. It's easy to see why. Triple Creek's 18 lodgepole cabins, some of which blend into the fir-studded meadows beside the trio of creeks for which the resort is named, others peeking from pines on their own private hillsides, are knotty love nests with all sorts of interior amenities: massive, hand-crafted log beds, his-and-her bathrooms, double steam showers; and fieldstone hearths flanked by plush sofas. For *travelgirls* who prefer not to completely unplug from the real world, owner Craig Barrett, Intel's CEO/president, has made sure each cabin has a data port. Cabins also have small kitchens stocked with gourmet goodies (coffee, cheese, wine, homemade cookies) and there's a private Jacuzzi on your back patio. You may not want to fight the urge to cocoon, but by all means try. The call of the wild is waiting!

The resort's log cabin fitness center, with high-tech equipment and large windows overlooking views of a soaring mountain landscape, is a great place to limber up, stretch and get your heart rate up. Then head for the hills for thigh-burning hiking. In springtime, the craggy Sawtooth Mountains are carpeted with wildflowers



and the streams are running high. Trails climb past tumbling waterfalls to looking-glass lakes ringed by alpine blooms and to panoramic peaks overlooking a sea of evergreens. Or you can saddle up for a guided trail ride to rocky plateaus where you might glimpse mountain goats. (Anyone who says the horse gets all the exercise has never ridden one. A few hours of riding will give your butt and thighs a workout they'll remember for days.) And once you're saddle-sore, it's time to

take in majestic mountain views on a guided Hummer tour.

Back at the lodge, you can swim laps in the heated pool, pitch horseshoes, play croquet or golf, or enjoy a game of tennis with spectacular views of the West Fork Valley. Triple Creek is also a wonderful place to learn to fly fish, whether you want to cast your line for the afternoon or set out on a multi-day float trip. And *travelgirl*, you can turn those feathery flies into beautiful earrings! In winter, the ranch offers cross-country skiing, snowshoeing through fresh Montana powder to see elk and moose, horseback riding, snowmobiling and dazzling displays of the Northern Lights. **For more information and reservations, call (406) 821-4600 or visit www.ranweb.com/triple/.**

5 The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Perfect for: *travelgirls* who want four-star lodging, fitness and cuisine, their choice of every imaginable outdoor sport and lots of Rocky Mountain highs.

This legendary grand dame was the finest golf and spa resort west of the Mississippi during the 1920's. In 1994, a spectacular two-storey lakefront spa and fitness center was added to the premises and a four-star fitness resort was born.

The Broadmoor is set on 3,000 acres of lawns, gardens and fountains—and located a mile up, a factor that automatically ups the fitness ante. You flatlanders may want to build in an extra day or two to acclimatize, as you'll need real stamina to make a



Broadmoor bathroom

dent in the fitness ops offered here: There are five swimming pools, 12 tennis courts, three championship golf courses, plus an exercise palace equipped with high-tech everything, soaring skylit ceilings, a lap pool with a juice bar and a spa café warmed by a log fire. With floor-to-ceiling windows, you can

joġ/hike/climb to views of the real Pike's Peak or a virtual one. The resort even has a zoo, perched midway up a mountain and accessed via a series of switchbacks that'll give you throbbing quads. Awaiting you at the top are 300 species of critters plus a herd of giraffes and the Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun, a four-storey stone tower overlooking town and miles of evergreen forests. Back down at the resort, rent a bike and cycle to Garden of the Gods past spectacular orange sandstone spires and monoliths bordered by pink alabaster. Then rent a car and drive to Helen Hunt Falls, where a trail staircase leads up to the thundering plunger immortalized on the Coors Beer label.

Still have energy to burn? Manitou Springs, a neighboring 1870's spa town, offers aerobic shopping on steep streets lined with galleries, cafes, boutiques, restaurants and New Age shops where you can buy crystals and get your palm read. At the very top of town is Manitou Cliff Dwellings Museum, where cliff dwellings from southwestern Colorado were disassembled into tens of thousands of individual stones and marked for position 300 miles away here. Or check out Mira Mont Castle, a restored 1895 stone mansion built by a wealthy French priest who moved here in hopes the springs

would cure him of his tuberculosis. It didn't, but don't let that discourage you from heading back to the Broadmoor for a luxury soak, steam, whirl, rub or massage back at the resort's lavish Italian-Renaissance-style spa palace.

With nine hotel buildings, you can choose to snooze in Old World to modern splendor, and dine in one of 13 restaurants—from the penthouse dining room to the healthy spa café. For more information and reservations, call (719) 635-7506 or visit www.broadmoor.com.



Nemacolin Woodland Resort & Spa, Farmington, Pennsylvania

Perfect for: *travelgirls* who want to sleep (and bubble up) under crystal chandeliers, dine on gourmet sushi and enjoy the best fitness and spa pampering that money can buy.

If you're a modern-day princess, welcome home. Located atop a scenic bluff in western Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands, this 1,200-acre resort, formerly a private hunting estate for the rich and famous, rises like a mirage from the forest.

The main hotel, modeled after The Ritz in Paris, is a storybook castle come to life, with crystal chandeliers sparkling in the lobby and the lounges. You'll even find a couple of them dangling over your bed and bathroom Jacuzzi. Home, James!

Priceless works of art, antiques, sculptures, jeweled treasures and Tiffany glass adorn the hotels, and there's a grand piano gracing many a corner. More casual digs include an English country-style lodge, plus a country club-style hotel and cozy condos overlooking the championship golf course.

The four-level fitness center is a visual masterpiece constructed of native stone and glass and designed by a feng shui artist, with indoor streams, waterfalls and live trees, plus a stunning gourmet sushi restaurant with soaring ceilings, glass walls and a brass sushi bar facing the open kitchen.

Outdoors, the grounds have a national park feel; rent a bicycle or inline skates for a scenic workout along the paved recreational pathway, play golf on two courses (the Golf Academy offers instruction and video analysis) or enjoy horseback riding. The resort's indoor equestrian center offers dressage training and trail rides and if that's not enough, two more options are outdoor tennis courts and fly fishing in a stocked lake.

Between November and March, Nemacolin (by the way, the resort is named for a native Delaware Indian Chief who was an historic trail-blazer) is a winter wonderland of fitness where you can enjoy cross-country skiing on miles of groomed trails, snowmobiling, ice skating on the frozen lake and downhill skiing on the resort's gentle 325-foot ski slope, complete with old-fashioned ski lifts and a snow-making system. For more information and reservations, call (800) 422-2736 or visit www.nemacolin.com.

THIS IS CAROLE JACOB'S INAUGURAL ARTICLE FOR *travelgirl*. WE ARE THRILLED TO HAVE HER JOIN THE STAFF AS FITNESS EDITOR. HER FAVORITE TRAVEL DESTINATION IS BISHOP CREEK CANYON IN CALIFORNIA'S HIGH SIERRAS.



Lobby at the Nemacolin