

BIZ | SUCCESS STORIES

The Equinox Golf Resort & Spa is located in the heart of Vermont's Green Mountains.



GREEN MOUNTAIN *getaway*



The spa offers active guests the perfect respite after a busy day spent outdoors.

Find out how a world-class spa in small-town Vermont continues to thrive.

BY NICOLE ALTAVILLA

LOCATED IN THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST IN HISTORIC MANCHESTER VILLAGE, VT, The Equinox Golf Resort & Spa has welcomed guests for more than 250 years. It is a popular place year-round for visitors near and far because of its many amenities, activities, and offerings including an award-winning par-71, 18-hole championship golf course; guided hiking; axe-throwing; Orvis-lead fly fishing and clay shooting; falconry; Land Rover off-roading driving school; cross-country skiing; snowmobiling; sleighing; and more. When guests need a break from the many outdoor activities available to them on the property, they step inside the 10-treatment-room **Spa at The Equinox** for relaxation, pampering, and healing of the mind and body. "It's the perfect place to wind down after a long day of skiing or hiking," says Katherine Brown, spa director at the Spa at The Equinox. Here, Brown reveals how the spa has continued to succeed since its opening in 2003.

[Q+A]

TO WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THE SPA'S SUCCESS?

I attribute the spa's success to our staff, specifically our therapists and estheticians. Many of our providers have been here for 15-plus years, and guests keep coming back because they are familiar with the undeniable talent and quality of our staff. They are all so talented and we are so lucky to have the therapists and estheticians that we do.

WHAT MAKES THE SPA STAND OUT FROM THE COMPETITION?

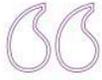
We have a long-standing reputation in the town of Manchester as the go-to for luxury, wellness, and comfort. We work hard to stay up-to-date and on trend in the industry, but also have that familiar, comforting, laid-back Vermont attitude that really gives a sense of place. We have members who have enjoyed the spa for many years, and I think the love in

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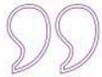


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the building really shows. We're in a sort of long-term relationship with Manchester, and we cherish that.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN GROWING THE SPA?

Right now, it's definitely been challenging growing the team. Staff is difficult to come by, which does affect day-to-day operations. We simply cannot keep up with demand, which is a challenge many businesses seem to be facing at this time.

HOW DO YOU ATTRACT NEW AND REPEAT CLIENTS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO VISIT?

We are turning more to social media and digital marketing, such as email blasts to locals and posts on Instagram. I like to run fun, seasonal promotions that feel festive and encourage people to come in for services.

HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR STAFF SELLING?

It's so important that the front-of-the-house staff gets to try everything on our menu. When they have treatments, not only does it feel like a special perk of working at the spa, but they are also able to speak on them with more knowledge and excitement since they have experienced how great our treatments and providers really are. We're offering a world-class product in small-town Vermont, and the staff can be really excited and proud of that.

HOW DO YOU KEEP THE TREATMENT MENU FRESH AND RELEVANT?

I try to find a balance between staying both approachable and on-trend. Incorporating fun and exciting enhancements to well-loved classics is largely the strategy there. I also like to consider the seasonality of Vermont and create special experiences based on the current climate. It can be so much fun to consider what services might be especially exciting in the winter versus summer, for example. There's something about getting a pumpkin enzyme facial in the height of fall that really gets me going. I love it.

HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR STAFF MOTIVATED?

I try to offer incentives where I can, allow time off where I can, and generally seek to avoid burnout as much as possible. It is so important that the staff takes a bit of time to focus on their own wellbeing—whatever that looks like for them.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?

I'd like to expand our esthetics menu and include some exciting new products and treatments. We will continue to build upon our offerings, ensure our facility is as safe and functional as possible, and keep moving forward. ●



The ambience in the spa and throughout the hotel promotes relaxation and rejuvenation.