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Clockwise from above: The Gunnison River rushes by Taylor River Lodge's serene setting in Colorado; the lodge's new Bathhouse features a saltwater pool and hot tub; The Barns at Troutbeck offer soul-nourishing yoga classes, while local and seasonal dishes nourish your body.

Courtesy Images, Clockwise From Top: Taylor River Lodge 120, Troutbeck, Nicole Fragant, Troutbeck, Matthew Mazzoni

Cold Comforts

Restore mental and physical health by getting back to nature at these winter retreats.

Taylor River Lodge (elevenexperience.com), an intimate, off-the-grid property in the Colorado mountains, has cornered the market on a luxury that has become increasingly difficult to come by: quiet. True moments of stillness are touted ad nauseam on meditation podcasts, but rarely actually found. That is, until this bastion of rustic splendor, from authenticity-focused hotelier Eleven Experience made the decision to open Taylor River's doors at the height of winter, with wellness at the forefront. "This setting is as serene as it is remote," says the resort's wellness program manager Caith Norton. "Connecting with nature lowers our blood pressure and quiets our hectic minds. The cocooning effects of winter days, along with the peaceful hush of longer evenings, underpin the atmosphere. We connect guests to the spirit of hibernation, undisturbed centeredness, to achieve long-lasting rejuvenation."

"Time and time again, I am reminded to listen to the pulses and energies of the body, which invite me to slow down and hibernate along with the season's natural cadence," says Norton. "Our bodies are required to work harder to stay warm in these elements and this deep rest replenishes our energy resources like nothing else."

That's part of what inspired the lodge to open its doors in winter 2020, in the early, most stressful pandemic days, after previously only hosting guests in warm weather as an upscale hiking, rock climbing, and lauded fly-fishing retreat. There's no high-octane downhill skiing on property (that's 45 minutes away in Crested Butte). By contrast, guests of the six standard cabins and two family

cabins emerge outside each morning to find themselves in solitude, awash in the sounds of a crisp mountain breeze wheezing through the trees, the Gunnison River rushing below or the hush of a recent snowfall.

That calming connection with the great outdoors is reflected in the overall aesthetic of upscale earthiness. The atmosphere among the slatted timber structures is made magical in the evenings by twinkle lights and unobstructed starry skies reflected on

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—Caith Norton, Taylor River Lodge

the sparkling snow. Indoors, the vibe is unpretentious, integrating modern woven textiles, taxidermy, reclaimed wood coffee tables, and bookshelves stacked with color-coordinated tomes and found knickknacks, much of it locally sourced.

At the new Bathhouse, you can sink into a saltwater pool or hot tub, or warm up in the steam room and sauna hub, with mile-high lofted ceilings and windows filling the space with incredible natural light and Rocky

Mountain views. On the warm stone tiles surrounding the thermal therapy plunges, enjoy calming experiences from yoga Nidra classes to snowfall meditations.

Because of the small number of guests, the property is able to make everything customized, from spa treatments to forest bathing experiences, during which guests find themselves snowshoeing among Colorado blue spruces, Lodgepole pines, aspens, Douglas firs and evergreens while spotting elk, deer, and ermine tracks in the snow.

Culinary offerings shift daily based on what's seasonal, plus guests can order off the menu, requesting favorite dishes they've tasted in the days before—which can be as unexpected in this environment as a Vietnamese banh mi sandwich. In addition to snow bathing and thermal therapies, spa treatments include winter-specific specialties such as the Fire and Ice massage, designed to boost immunity and flush toxins via warm river rocks and tension-releasing modalities, bolstered by Tata Harper products.

On the East Coast, where the Hudson Valley meets the Berkshires, **Troutbeck** (troutbeck.com) brings its own upscale country lens to winter hibernation. The rustic property, which came under new ownership in 2016, features historic elements like the walled garden, which dates back to 1916 and transforms into an autumnal canvas of changing leaves in fall and a winter wonderland as it grows colder. After temporarily closing its doors for the pandemic, this property reopened in 2020 with a bevy of new features and a fresh focus: self-care. →