



Take an eight-hour drive or a nonstop flight from BWI to Asheville, North Carolina for a trip full of relaxation, delicious food prepared fresh at every meal, cabins that meet your every need, and fitness classes to kick start a healthier less stressed you. (Skyterra Wellness)

Take a nonstop flight from D.C. to relaxation at Skyterra Wellness

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by TINA IRIZARRY

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You might be thinking, "okay, what is this magical place you speak of?" [Skyterra \(http://www.skyterrawellness.com/\)](http://www.skyterrawellness.com/) is a new wellness retreat located right outside of Asheville, North Carolina, nestled in the pristine Blue Ridge Mountains. "Whether the need is to de-stress, lose weight, or simply relax, the dedicated staff and sustainable approach to mindful living at Skyterra Wellness will inspire just that," said Amber Shadwick, Director of Operations.

When Skyterra contacted me and asked me to come visit, my initial reaction was "Absolutely! When can I come?!" I had been wanting to test out a wellness retreat and this was my perfect opportunity. On December 4, I packed my bags and headed down to North Carolina --I decided to make the drive and it wasn't bad. I couldn't wait to be in the mountains, exercising, eating healthy and relaxing -- a.k.a all of my favorite things!

I wasn't going to Skyterra to lose weight. I was going more to destress and take some time to focus on myself -- D.C. can be a pretty stressful place sometimes. Shadwick says, "Many of our guests choose Skyterra as the first step in an overall need to reclaim their lives. The need to refocus life in a way that allows one to live more healthfully -- healthier mind and healthier body. Our team of professionals help deliver a program that is achievable while at Skyterra and sustainable at home." And this was my plan!

I arrived at Skyterra around 2 p.m. on a Sunday and was greeted and checked-in to my three-bedroom cabin with a fireplace, huge kitchen, a TV with Bravo (YES!) and let's talk about the bedroom! The bedroom had a king size bed with the most comfortable comforter I had ever experienced (ps. they sell it in the gift shop), a bathroom with a jacuzzi tub, two sinks, a beautiful shower and a walk-in closet. I honestly could've hung out in my cabin for three days and been totally fine!

Once I settled into my house, I was taken to orientation where I learned about the program and received my schedule for my time at Skyterra. My schedule included things like yoga, hikes, fitness classes, cooking demonstrations, and fitness/wellbeing classroom lessons.

"Guests can expect to experience classes ranging from strength training, cardiovascular training, yoga, meditation and mobility, and weather permitting, a variety of adventuresome options such as hiking, waterfall hunting, standup paddle boarding, and kayaking," added Shadwick.

Following orientation, it was time for dinner. This is when I met all the other ladies who I would be hanging out with for the next few days. At Skyterra, all the guests eat every meal together, which I loved; since I was there alone, it was nice to feel like I was part of a community. And I cannot say enough good things about the meals -- they were amazing and healthy! Some of my meals included things like omelets for breakfast, delicious soups for lunch, and fresh seafood and vegetables for dinner.

After dinner, it was time to unwind and disconnect. I headed back to my house, made some tea and relaxed in bed with a little Real Housewives of Atlanta.

My Monday morning began with a health screening that consisted of taking my weight, body mass index, body fat percentage, blood pressure, and many other things that were all put into a chart for me to review.

The rest of my day went as follows:

- Breakfast
- Connect class (a class that you start and end every day with, that focuses on breathing techniques and stretching)
- Yoga
- Cardio-based workout
- Lunch
- Strength training workout
- Educational class
- Hike
- Yoga
- Connect class
- Dinner

My second day was pretty similar, except I added in some hill walking with a fellow retreator in between activities.

When day two had come to an end, I didn't want to think about leaving the next morning! I felt great from eating REAL foods, exercising and not stressing about everything that needs to be done at home. I met some amazing fellow retreaters who all had the same interests as me and it was great to be able to connect with people who are passionate about health and fitness.

I only had two-and-a-half days at Skyterra, but the Skyterra team recommends staying anywhere from one week up to a month, depending on your goals. "There is so much to experience at Skyterra Wellness," said Shadwick. "We do offer shorter three-day stays but in order to really reset, relax and renew we recommend a full week, or longer, stay."

When I got home, I was asked a million times "well, how was it?!" and my response to everyone was "I didn't want to leave!" which is the honest truth. While I didn't get to stay a whole week, I had enough time to relax my mind, focus on my health, and de-stress.

Once you get home, the Skyterra team doesn't leave you hanging to fall back into your old habits -- they are there to help you succeed as you transition back into normal life. "Each guest is given a 28-day plan as well as a follow-up call from a professional following departure," said Shadwick. "Skyterra also offers custom wellness coaching available to guests who want, or need, continued accountability. Skyterra is here to support you on this journey and we care about your success."

As 2016 comes to an end and 2017 begins, take control of your life and get on a healthy track with a trip to Skyterra, if for no other reason than to sleep in the gigantic comfortable bed and eat some delicious food!



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