

Shore Lodge, a Luxury Resort Where Exceptional Service Is the Standard

By Tracy Beard
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Location, ambiance, furnishings, and amenities play a vital role in making a resort extraordinary, but service sets one place above another. Everyone desires to feel special. The bed can be cozy, the food delicious, and the destination spectacular, but if the service is subpar or non-existent, it does not bode well in my book. Shore Lodge exceeded all of my expectations. The attention to detail, special touches, and the personable devotion each staff member delivered from check-in to check-out put this lodge on my top ten list.



[Shore Lodge](#), located in McCall, Idaho, boasts awe-inspiring lake and mountain views, well-appointed rooms, an excellent spa, and fabulous drinks and dining opportunities. With all this and impeccable service, I cannot wait to make a return visit.

In 2011, Shore Lodge became part of a resort that includes a challenging golf course and Whitetail Club, a high-end residential community. Over the last ten years, the resort underwent 25 million dollars in renovations, including a new spa concept in 2011 and room renovations in 2014. Additional upgrades to the property included four unique dining options — The Narrows Steakhouse, The Bar, The Cutwater on Payette Lake, and the pool bar.



OUTSTANDING SERVICE

In-room dining allows you to decide whether you wish to venture out to a restaurant or savor delightful fare in your pajamas. My travel companion, Connie, and I enjoyed a basket filled with French pastries, quiches, juice, and coffee for breakfast in our room. We also ordered a picnic lunch basket loaded with sandwiches, salads, chips, and cookies to enjoy at Ponderosa Pine State Park one afternoon. Special treats like red wine and truffles delivered to our room ended the day on a delightful note.

WELL-APPOINTED ACCOMMODATIONS

All rooms at the lodge boast comfortable furnishings suited for a luxurious mountain resort. Guests can opt for a lovely standard room with typical amenities or upgrade to a more luxurious room with a fireplace or lake views. The Lakeview Fireside Suites include an outdoor terrace, private living room, sleeper sofa, and one or two queen beds. For an extended stay, consider the Pine Cottage, a three-bedroom residence with a state-of-the-art kitchen, dining room, living room, first-floor master suite, and guest suite upstairs.



INCREDIBLE DRINKS

If you are looking for an exceptional handcrafted cocktail made from the Pacific Northwest's finest spirits and ingredients, look no further than The Bar at Shore Lodge. The Bar features appetizing food and stunning views. The lead creative bartender, Eric Bomar, crafts unique signature cocktails each week using the season's best bounty.

One night I indulged in a Peruvian basil lemon drop with dried hibiscus and a sugar rim. Connie selected the Old fashioned made with Eric's summer essence simple syrup with peach and orange. Both drinks were exquisite and artistically pleasing to the eye. On another evening, Connie ordered the flaming huckleberry margarita, and I indulged in a light and refreshing Prosecco cocktail infused with peach, melon, and honey. Eric loves to use natural flavors and sweeteners instead of processed sugars and salts.



FINE DINING

The Narrows Steakhouse sets the stage for an unforgettable dining experience. Whether you are in the mood for a rich, juicy steak or something lighter from the sea, Executive Chef Antonio Estramera creates and delivers exceptional cuisine. You can choose from more than 450 wines in the restaurant's award-winning collection and enjoy them while soaking in the magnificent views of Payette Lake and the Salmon River Mountains.



Narrows Steakhouse, Tomahawk Chop

We began our meal at the Narrows with an amuse-bouche of pineapple shrimp fume with a tomato ginger puree followed by smoked trout bruschetta garnished with tomato, cipolini onion, and baby cilantro. After the delectable trout, I tackled the 28-ounce bone-in ribeye steak with minimal success. The Narrows offers steak diners a choice of precision cutlery. I chose a French Laguiole knife that cut through the steak like butter. Connie opted for the crab cakes with lemon Beurre Blanc, and we shared a scrumptious bowl of creamed spinach with brie.

The wine cellar at The Narrows is extensive. Because we ordered very different entrees, the sommelier chose a fantastic 2015 Dumol Pinot Noir bottle that married well with both the steak and the crab. After making only small dents in our large entrees, we asked the staff to box up the leftovers to go. We enjoyed a light and refreshing strawberry yuzu champagne sorbet between courses, and I topped off my dinner with a shot of Grand Manier Quintessence. This Grand Manier comes with a lofty price tag but was truly spectacular.

On our last morning, we dined at The Cutwater on Payette Lake. My croissant with avocado, tomato, and poached eggs was tasty. Connie's bagel with orange-flavored cream cheese, capers, tomato, hard-boiled egg, thinly sliced red onions, and smoked salmon was as delicious as it was beautiful.



OPULENT SPA

The Cove spa at Shore Lodge is one of the most inviting spas I have ever visited. Dip into the lodge's private hot springs that fill two outside pools, or swim a few laps in the cooler indoor pool. Be sure to set aside time to immerse yourself in the pools either before or after a relaxing massage with one of the lodge's talented masseurs.



EXCITING ACTIVITIES

Located on the south end of Payette Lake, the marina at Shore Lodge offers all the equipment necessary to enjoy the water. Paddleboards, kayaks, canoes, and boats for waterskiing are all available for rent.

Lakeside yoga classes take place on weekends, and you can warm up at the poolside fire pit in the evening while roasting marshmallows and making s'mores. The pool is available for swimming during the warmer months, the fitness studio is open year-round, and when the area is not blanketed in a gorgeous layer of snow, you can check out the cruiser bikes for a spin around town.

If you love to shop, McCall boasts 44 unique shops featuring boutique clothing and artisan wares.

Shore Lodge offers something for everyone in all four seasons of the year. Whether you are looking for a staycation or a weekend away, the ambiance and hospitality at Shore Lodge will be sure to make everyone in your group feel special.